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AUTHOR Resch, Kenneth Edward
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ABSTRACT

Results of research performed to determine whether or not newly enrolled freshman students improved after one and one-half quarters of composition instruction at Western Illinois University are presented. Using an essay-type placement test given at initial enrollment as a pre-test, 158 students were selected as the experimental group to write post-test essays after one and one-half quarters of composition had been completed. Both the pre-test and post-test essays were subjected to an analytic evaluation which numerically rated each student on the areas of content, organization, style, mechanics, and overall score on the essay. A paired "t" test and a Duncan's Multiple Range test were used to analyze the essay scores data. The general findings and overall conclusions drawn from the study indicated that freshman students do improve their writing ability after one and one-half quarters of composition. That the improvement was due solely to composition instruction cannot be confirmed since no control group existed to control maturation and other possible extraneous variables. A total of 30 null hypotheses were tested in this experiment. Statistical data are presented in 16 tables and in three appendixes. (DB)

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FRESHMAN COMPOSITION AS IT IS TAUGHT AT WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

A Study

Presented to

the Departments of Education and English

Western Illinois University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science in Education

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by

Kenneth Edward Resch

April, 1972

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A writer is an individual who uses language to discover meaning in experience and communicate it.

Donald M. Murray

PREFACE

The kernal idea around which this entire study has been developed was planted long ago while I was still an undergraduate student in English Education. Numerous instructors--chief of whom were Mr. Stacy and Dr. Lindsey--stressed the need for competence in the field of English. I said competence, not scholarship, for there is a world of difference between the two. Their deep and abiding concern was with the ability to effectively write a meaningful essay; and, even further, to be able to teach the translatable skills of composition to others.

Inspired by this view, I proceeded to teach composition in high school and at the college level as well. The need for effective teaching was obvious. Unfortunately, there seemed to be some question concerning the effectiveness of our teaching on the collegiate level. Thus, this study was born out of a desire to <u>see</u> if we are fulfilling our obligations and also if there is empirical evidence to substantiate progress being made by students in composition. It is sincerely hoped that the findings presented here will aid the composition instructors at Western in finding areas of concern in the teaching of writing to freshman students, and thereby helping those students become competent writers of effective and meaningful prose.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with deepest regard that I wish to thank the Graduate Committee at Western for their kindness in allowing me to pursue a project that lies close to my heart, for without their foresight in recognizing my pursuits as being worthy of study, this project would never have been completed. I wish to also thank Dr. Wayne Wiggins, Dr. Charles Oprian, and Mr. Martin Post for all the help they gave me in the aspects of research, statistics, and computor programing needed to complete this project. It is also with deepest admiration that I thank Dr. Alfred J. Lindsey for being the patient listener and critic of my many ideas for this project. He is a man I have grown to admire for many years as being a person supremely dedicated to the task of students and their writing experiences--without his guidance I doubt that I would be the instructor I believe I am today. Finally, I wish to thank the many instructors and students who gave unstintingly of their time and effort in making this study a worthwhile one as well as the three instructors who so willingly cooperated in grading the essays used for evaluation. Again, my sincere thanks to all of you for your cooperation.

Kenneth E. Resch

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The State of English

Since 1957 when the Sputnik hailed in the Space Age, education in the broadest sense of the word has been in a seemingly constant state of flux. Every new class of graduates with teaching certificates feels that they have the panacea to cure the ills that have befallen the educational system today. Unfortunately, very few of their idealistic remedies succeed; and therefore the state of turmoil within our various academic disciplines continues. English is not without its share of problems.

Of all the different subjects which students confront in the educational process, English is [illegible] year they attend school. Since this is the case, then, there should be, must be, some rationale behind what we do within the English classroom. On the one hand, teachers of English realize that their discipline is of paramount importance in the school curriculum; because without an adequate knowledge of English, students would have considerable difficulty in communicating. At the other end of the spectrum, it must also be understood that English is a very enigmatic problem simply because there have been so many different methods of approach offered to fulfill the objectives of teaching students their language. Basically, there are two broad areas that are the concerns of English teachers on nearly all levels of education, namely literature and language. The area of language, a very diversified field, concerns a variety of basic skills; important among them are grammar, composition, speaking, reading, listening, and understanding.

Applebee and Squire (2-1965) report that award winning high school English teachers in the high schools surveyed use over 52% of their classroom time emphasizing literature and the remaining time is divided among all the other concerns of English with composition receiving about 14% of the classroom time.[1] Since it appears that composition is not of major importance compared with literature, the question often raised concerning its effectiveness and necessity is one that truly needs investigation.

The State of Composition

Wilcox (42-1968) reports, in a preliminary study of English programs at selected universities across the nation, that 93% of all institutions polled required one term of composition and 78% required

in the English departments was devoted to freshman composition.[3] It would appear from these statistics that institutions of higher education deem the teaching of composition a necessity. To further point up the concerns of composition, one needs only to glance at a current book publisher's catalogue to see the various composition and rhetoric handbooks, essay readers, workbooks, and books teaching the skills of writing that are continually offered to the teacher of English. Since colleges are concerned with the teaching of composition, it follows that there should be some definable curricular objectives for what goes on in the classrooms. Quite often on the college level, freshman composition courses are organized around syllabi which objectively attempt to structure the program around areas of concern that each English department feels are important for the students to utilize and understand. Yet,

even though universities may adopt relatively rigid syllabi, a problem still exists. Unlike secondary education, where the process of teaching is more rigid, university level teaching is traditionally looked at as being considerably more relaxed and flexible. This is not to say that universities should adopt the rigid programs used on the lower levels of education. However, it is to say that it is necessary to justify this commitment of time and effort by objective means.

In order to ward off criticism for what goes on in English composition courses, teachers must face the perplexing problem of proving that they teach their students skills that are translatable to other academic areas. For decades serious research has been done in order to ascertain the role of Freshman Composition on the university level. Kitzhaber has capsulized the problem plaguing teachers of composition when he says:

> The deficiencies of high school English courses and textbooks and of the professional preparation of many high school teachers of English have now been made a matter of public concern, and rightly so if any large-scale improvement is to be brought about. But what about the college English courses that nearly half of all high school graduates will take as freshmen? How good are these courses? How well are they being taught? What is in them? What are their announced purposes? What forms do they take? Do they avoid weaknesses and errors for which college English teachers have blamed English courses in the secondary schools?4

The problem is serious. If teachers are honestly to attempt to resolve the questions posed by Kitzhaber, then they must carefully scrutinize what occurs in their composition programs as they are presently established. Many studies have been done concerning freshman programs and most of them, chiefly those done by Miller (36-1958) and Fellers (18-1953) report a dismal picture of composition teaching.

The Freshman Composition Program At Western Illinois University

The freshman composition staff at Western Illinois University makes every effort to properly place incoming students into a course designed with their competencies or weaknesses in mind. By taking into consideration a summer placement essay and various test scores taken by students (these include ACT scores, high school English grades, etc.) prior to enrollment, each freshman is placed in either the 111 or 101 sequence of composition, or if the student is superior, he receives Advanced Placement. The 111 sequence of composition is designed for the student with more serious problems in organization and syntax, while the 101 sequence, by incorporating more literature, allows more advanced students an opportunity to respond to ideas found in literature. Each sequence is independent of the other and has a separate syllabus outlining the course objectives that should be incorporated over the three quarters. Realizing that no means of measuring student placement is absolute, the freshman composition program at large leaves room for shifting students.

If a teacher feels that a student is very weak in composition fundamentals, he may request that the student in question receive special tutorial help with a graduate assistant. The help is provided free of charge to the student as part of the Intensive Writing Center and its basic aim is to have the student work on essay problems on a one to one basis with a graduate student in the Department. In many cases, students seeking this help have benefited immensely; and in those cases where students have failed to improve so that they maintain a C average, they are then further required to formally enroll in English 238, which extends the basic concepts of the tutorial program except that a student is required to remain enrolled until his ability is up to a C average or better.

Aside from the tutorial program, there are two other means by which misplaced students may be changed: the first of these is to shift a student from one sequence to another depending upon his ability as perceived by the instructor. What this means is that a student enrolled in English 111, the first quarter course, who shows high achievement may be moved to English 102 the second quarter at the suggestion of the instructor. Likewise, a student who proves to be weak in 101 may be moved down to 112 the second quarter. The second option open is for an exceptional student in either sequence to be awarded Advanced Placement after one or two quarters of composition. Thus, every effort is made to insure that each student will receive the maximum benefit and attention that is possible while enrolled in the freshman composition program.

The individual syllabus for each composition sequence (copies of each follow on pages seven through fourteen) is designed around general principles of writing which the Department of English at Western feels are the important concerns of a composition course. Each syllabus is designed to meet the needs of the specific students enrolled with the overall aim being to have the students "produce an effectively written essay."

The English 111 syllabus is designed to have the students organize their thoughts in a logical manner, discuss a particular topic fully and completely, become aware of the many stylistic procedures incorporated in a well-written essay, and to know the principles of mechanics which include punctuation, sentence development, grammatical elements, etc. To meet this aim, a basic rhetoric book is used to help the student not only learn these principles but also to show him examples and give him exercises designed around the use of these fundamental ideas. The 112

course incorporates a small amount of literature which is used, not to teach literary ideas, but for the purpose of providing the student with supplementary reading material from which essay topics may be taken. In addition to these readings, an essay reader is also incorporated to provide the student with complete examples of the essay forms being discussed in a particular course. The third quarter of the 111 sequence is designed to teach the student the methods of general research and to properly write a research paper. Literature is again used in 113 for the sole purpose of providing the student with a fruitful area from which an interesting topic for research may be taken.

Like the 111 sequence, the 101 sequence utilizes a rhetorical guide and an essay reader as the basic course books from which the students work. The chief aim of 101 is much like that of 111 except that more extensive work is done is such areas as persuasion, logic, and writing about literature. Thus, students enrolled in the 101 sequence are considered to be more advanced than students in English 111 and in that regard the work is progressively more demanding of the 101 sequence students.

Outline for English 111 Sequence in Freshman Composition

General Information:

1. Students are assigned to the 111 sequence on the basis of tests given during the summer to determine the student's writing competence at that time and on high school performance.

2. During the fall and winter quarters instructors in 111 sections should identify students working at a level which qualifies them for enrollment in the 101 sequence and recommend their transfer at the end of the quarter.

3. If the instructor so chooses he may refer students who are performing at a low level to Dr. Lindsey, who will invite these students to participate in the Intensive Writing Center.

4. Freshman Composition instructors are encouraged to propose plans for experimental sections in any quarter of the freshman sequence to Dr. Lindsey and the Freshman Composition Committee. It is the policy of the Department to invite experimentation whenever possible.

General Principles:

I. Aim of the Course

THE GOAL OF THE FRESHMAN COMPOSITION PROGRAM IS TO ENABLE THE STUDENTS TO PRODUCE AN EFFECTIVELY WRITTEN ESSAY. IF THE TEACHER APPLIES THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO ANY ESSAY, HE WILL GUIDE THE STUDENTS TO THIS GOAL.

1. Content: Does the student discuss a significant subject intelligently and completely?
   - A. Does he have an adequate knowledge of his subject?
   - B. Does he avoid errors in logic?

2. Organization: Is the method of presentation clear and effective?
   - A. Is the central idea (or thesis) clear?
   - B. Are there ample details and examples to develop the central idea (or thesis)?
   - C. Are the ideas developed in logical order?
     1. Are the paragraphs placed in natural and logical sequence within the whole?
     2. Are the sentences placed in natural and logical sequence, from premise to conclusion, within the paragraphs?
     3. Are the individual paragraphs sufficiently developed through use of specific and concrete examples, where needed?
   - D. Are the transitions adequate?
   - E. Are ideas given the emphasis required by their importance?

3. Style: Does the essay incorporate effective stylistic procedures?
   - A. Is the diction accurate, well-chosen, and sufficiently varied?
   - B. Is the sentence structure effective?
     1. Is there appropriate variety in sentence structure?
     2. Are uses of subordination and coordination appropriate?
   - C. Is there appropriate variety in ways of developing paragraphs?

N.B. Concerning mechanics, is the essay reasonably free of idiomatic difficulties, fragments, run-on sentences, comma splices, faulty parallel structure, mixed constructions, dangling modifiers, and errors of agreement, case, and verb forms? Is the paper reasonably free of spelling errors and punctuation errors?

Since the aim of the three-quarter sequence is to improve the student's ability to express his ideas clearly and forcefully in writing, a satisfactory level of proficiency in writing is the basis for judging the student's success in the courses. Thus, his final grade should be based mainly on his performance in themes.

II. General Nature of the Course

The goals mentioned, concerning the writing of an effective essay, are those which we hope each student will achieve in the Freshman 111, 112, 113 sequence. A variety of good teaching styles may be used to attain these goals, and each teacher is free to use any teaching method which he feels best meets his students' needs. But keep in mind that 112 and 113 teachers will expect that students have mastered the material and skills taught in the previous quarter or quarters. Remember also that the first need we are responsible for gratifying is the students' need to write quality expository prose. The 111 sequence is designed to examine various modes of exposition at work--personal opinion, essay discussion questions, special considerations when writing about literature, and research papers. The unifying factors in all expository writing are that the papers represent the students' ability to organize information that they desire to present to a reading audience. Accordingly, all expository writing, regardless of its type, requires clarity, logical and effective organization, and thorough and accurate presentation.

This is not to say that either narrative or descriptive writing has no value. Undoubtedly these forms of discourse are beneficial in helping the students to see the importance of sufficient, vivid details to produce good writing. However, much of the students' writing experience in secondary school has emphasized description and narration, and they handle these forms reasonably well. But since the purpose of the 111 sequence is to give students practice in writing themes which are organized and developed around a central idea, description and narration are significant only as they lead to competence in handling exposition.

SPECIFIC AIMS AND CONTENT OF ENGLISH 111

The 111 course focuses mainly on the content and organization of student themes. What should be kept in mind is that students should be writing full length themes by the end of the quarter. Whether the teacher approaches the idea of the whole theme first, or paragraphs first, or sentences first, or what have you, is important only in that the teacher should use the best approach for his students in accordance with his most effective way of presentation. The chapters which should be covered in Guth's Words and Ideas are chapters 1, 4. 5, 11, and 13. These chapters deal with exploring and focusing the subject of a theme, with introducing the idea of a thesis--or central idea--and support, with the themes of

process, classification, comparison and contrast, and definition, with writing papers of opinion anchored to facts, with ways of organizing and revising paragraphs, with developing variety in sentence structure, and with eliminating awkward sentence constructions. The other chapters of the book exclusive of chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, 10--which will be covered in 112 and 113--are free for the teacher to use as she/he wishes to meet the students' needs in attaining competence in writing.

The essays in the Kakonis text, Strategies in Rhetoric, may be used as models for class discussions concerning the rhetoric theories, ideas, organization, and skill of the essay writers as they exemplify the skills which we are trying to develop in student writing. In addition to the rhetoric modes that Guth proposes, Kakonis adds analysis, analogy, and cause and effect. The teacher may choose to consult each of these rhetoric approaches as she/he teaches the essay. The entire book, exclusive of "Myth and Symbol," pp. 397 - 455, may be used.

Texts: Hans Guth, Words and Ideas (Ch. 1, 4, 5, 11, & 13)
Kakonis and others, Strategies in Rhetoric (pp. 1 - 396)

Writing Assignments: Each teacher should assign writing that approximates a minimum of 5 substantial essays.

SPECIFIC AIMS AND CONTENT OF ENGLISH 112

The 112 course is a continuation of the foundations of good writing covered in 111, but 112 examines the specific topics of argumentation and persuasion, of tone and style, of writing about literature, and of the practical prose forms of essay examination (Ch. 6, 7, 10, and 19 in Guth, Words and Ideas). At this point of the sequence consciousness about improving and polishing writing style probably will develop in students, and thus emphasis on Chapter 8 ("Tone and Style") of Words and Ideas is strongly suggested. Keep in mind that the teacher should not hesitate to review material in Words and Ideas covered during the first quarter, if the class' needs demand such review.

The essays in Strategies in Rhetoric in the section "Myth and Symbol" (pp. 397 - 455) again may be used as models for discussion and criticism.

The teacher should also choose two of the following literature forms to provide reading material for students to base writing themes about literature upon: a short story anthology, a novel, a play.

Texts: Guth, Words and Ideas (Ch. 6, 7, 8, 10, 19)
Kakonis, Insights, "Myth and Symbol" pp. 397 - 455

Teacher's choice of 2 of the following 3: a short story anthology, a novel, a play.

Writing Assignments: Each teacher should assign at least 1 paper on argumentation, 1 on persuasion, and 1 on writing a theme about literature. The other two themes, which would make a total of 5 substantial themes, minimum, are left to the teacher's discretion as to whether he wants a majority of argumentation, persuasion, or literature themes for the quarter.

SPECIFIC AIMS AND CONTENT OF ENGLISH 113

Since the student was introduced to specialized forms of writing in 112, the 113 course continues the study of specialized writing forms and examines and emphasizes the writing of the research paper, writing essays based on research, and using the library. Chapter 9 in Words and Ideas contains a thorough presentation of the research process and writing of the research paper.

Each teacher should also select a topic of his or her choice. Every student, then, will research and write about an aspect of this total problem. It is possible to use the library for research, but the teacher may choose to go to casebooks instead. If casebooks are necessary each teacher will be asked to select the casebooks that he requires the student to buy. Other than the research, students may be asked to do other papers (short ones) based on the topic, if the teacher so desires.

Further plans will be forthcoming after further communications with the Library in the Fall of 1971.

Texts: Guth, Words and Ideas (Chapter 9)
A maximum of 6 paperback books of the teacher's choice. If more than 6 are needed, special permission should be obtained from the Freshmen Composition Committee.

Writing: A research paper and other papers based on the research to approximate the equivalent of 5 substantial essays.

Outline for English 101 Sequence in Freshman Composition

General Information

1. Students are assigned to the 101 sequence on the basis of tests given during the summer to determine the student's writing competence at that time and on high school performance.

2. During the fall and winter quarters instructors in 101 sections should identify students working at a level which qualifies them for enrollment in the 111 sequence and recommend their transfer at the end of the quarter.

3. If the instructor so chooses he may refer students who are performing at a low level to Dr. Lindsey, who will invite these students to participate in the Intensive Writing Center.

4. Students who distinguish themselves in English 101 and who demonstrate that they posses the skills to be taught in the sequence may be awarded advanced placement upon the recommendation of the instructor.

5. Freshman Composition instructors are encouraged to propose plans for experimental sections in any quarter of the freshman sequence to Dr. Lindsey and the Freshman Composition Committee. It is the policy of the Department to invite experimentation whenever possible.

General Principles:

1. Aim of the Course

THE GOAL OF THE FRESHMAN COMPOSITION PROGRAM IS TO ENABLE THE STUDENTS TO PRODUCE AN EFFECTIVELY WRITTEN ESSAY. A CHIEF MEANS TO THIS END IN 102-103 IS WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE. IF THE TEACHER APPLIES THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO AN ESSAY, HE WILL GUIDE THE STUDENTS TO THIS GOAL.

I. Content: Does the student discuss a significant subject intelligently and completely?
   A. Does he have an adequate knowledge of his subject?
   B. Does he avoid errors in logic?

II. Organization: Is the method of presentation clear and effective?
   A. Is the central idea for theme clear?
   B. Are there ample details and examples to develop the central idea for theme?
   C. Are the ideas developed in logical order?
      1. Are the paragraphs placed in natural and logical sequence within the whole?
      2. Are the sentences placed in natural and logical sequence, from premise to conclusion, within the paragraphs?
      3. Are the individual paragraphs sufficiently developed through use of specific and concrete examples, where needed?
   D. Are the transitions adequate?
   E. Are ideas given the emphasis required by their importance?

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Texts: Hans Guth, Words and Ideas (Chapters 1, 4, 5, 8, 7, 11, & 13)
Kakonis, Strategies in Rhetoric (Pages 1-396)

Writing Assignments: Each teacher should assign writing that is equivalent to a minimum of 5 substantial essays.

ENGLISH 111

The 111 course is a continuation of the foundations of good writing covered in 101, but 111 examines the specific topics of tone and style as well as writing about literature, specifically about papers on literary topics. At this point of the sequence, consciousness about improving and polishing writing style probably will develop in students; thus, emphasis on Chapter 8 ("Tone and Style") of Words and Ideas is strongly suggested. Keep in mind, also, that the teacher should not hesitate to refer material in Words and Ideas covered during the first quarter of the class. Chapter 10 in Words and Ideas concerns writing about literature, particularly the critical review. Both the Guth and Kakonis texts contain material that may be useful in teaching writing about literature. This study will be continued in the 112 course where various generic forms which should lead to the development of writing about literature. It becomes evident that 107 is not a literature course, rather, literature is used as a source about which students write, the fundamental concern remains composition.

Since many of the students will enroll in literature survey courses at a later date, exposures to a number of genres might be profitable if a teacher feels he can integrate them effectively in the writing program.

Texts: Hans Guth, Words and Ideas (Chapters 8 & 10)
Kakonis, Strategies in Rhetoric, "Myth and Symbol," (Pages 397-455).

Writing: Each teacher should assign writing that is equivalent to a minimum of 5 substantial essays.

[illegible]

Texts: Gutch, Words and Ideas (Chapter 9)
A maximum of 5 paperback books of the teacher's choice. If more than 6 are needed, special permission should be obtained from the Freshman Composition Committee.

Writing: A body of writing to approximate at least the equivalent of 5 substantial essays. (The suggestion is that there perhaps be 2 short critical papers and a research paper.)

The Problem Defined

Since programs in freshman composition are vulnerable to criticism, especially today when the watchwords of most educational circles seem to be "relevancy" and "accountability," it takes little effort to begin attacking various course offerings in composition on the collegiate level. Such has been the case at Western Illinois University. For quite some time various groups have brought the freshman composition program into their line of fire as being a curricular offering that achieves very little and could be easily eliminated. The bulk of the evidence against maintaining a freshman writing program appears to be centered in two areas, namely: the group's judgements are based on seeing the performance of a limited number of students who have not made any significant writing improvement or else they use the traditional scapegoat for eliminating the program that Kitzhaber quotes in Themes, Theories, and Therapy:

> 'It is our assumption,' says the chairman at one . . . college, 'that students entering college should have acquired this skill [writing] in secondary school and that application and development of such skill is best handled in terms of the disciplines in which they actually have to do their writing.'[5]

Unfortunately, this view is not supported by the research done in the field as evidenced in the study done by Mathews and Scouffas (34-1952) who conducted a follow-up study of entering freshmen in 1951-52 and noted that "the striking fact established by comparison of the present record with the earlier is the increase in the percentage of students marked for errors in almost all individual categories."[6] There is little contemporary evidence to the contrary.

In regards to maintaining freshman composition courses Kitzhaber maintains that they serve a dual function for the university. He says

that composition functions in a "service" and a "liberal" capacity. The service aspect of composition is that "the course exists to provide immediate therapy for students whose academic future is clouded by their inability to manage the written form of English with reasonable ease, precision, and correctness."[7] The second function of composition is not of a practical nature but one of liberal, intellectual competency and training. "This arguement assumes that the primary purpose of the course is to focus the student's attention on fundamental principles of clear thinking and the clear and effective written expression of that thinking. . . ."[8]

This, then, is the situation which prompted this writer to conduct a study into the effectiveness of freshman composition at Western Illinois University. It seems that the one outstanding attribute voiced by the Department of English in favor of the three quarter sequential program in composition is that students do improve their writing abilities by being taught the needed skills of effective writing. If this is not the case, the groups who oppose the retention of freshman composition may be justified in their feelings towards such a course offering. Yet to simply state that students will or will not improve without having any empirical evidence to support either point would also appear to be an equally vast generalization made simply to fight for or against keeping the program under question. It is necessary, then, that some type of study be undertaken to determine with some degree of accuracy just what does occur in the freshman composition courses as they are now being taught.

With all these points in mind, the problem as it now stands seems to be whether or not there is any significant difference, in terms of student writing improvement, after taking freshman composition. Prior to a

freshman student's initial enrollment at Western in the fall, he is required to write a diagnostic essay as one measure of placement in the proper composition sequence. This diagnostic essay is then rated and the essay score along with other scores is computorized to establish the student's placement in composition. The placement procedures are relatively accurate because they utilize, in addition to an actual writing sample, class rank, ACT score overall, ACT score in English, and high school recommendations and grades.

The problem to be examined and studied, then, will be to determine if a significant difference exists between the summer essays (pre-test) and essays written after one and one-half quarters of composition (post-test) for students enrolled in the 111 or the 101 sequence as incoming freshmen in the Fall quarter of 1971 at Western Illinois University.

The Need for this Study

This study is needed in order to empirically confirm whether or not the freshman composition program, as it is presently being administered, achieves the curricular objectives set forth in the syllabus for each separate sequence. Further, it is necessary to point out any areas of weakness that exist in the program so that corrective r asures may be taken in the future.

Assumptions and Limitations

I. Assumptions

1. It is assumed that instructors taught freshman composition in accordance with the guidelines established in the syllabus for each sequence.
2. It is assumed that the effects of age, sex, and socio-economic background are randomly scattered in the sample population so as to have no significance on the results.
3. It is assumed that the essay raters graded the post-test essays under the same approximate conditions as they graded the pre-test essays.

II. Limitations

1. The generalizations made in this study are applicable only to those areas measured in the student's compositions according to the Essay Evaluation Sheet.
2. The generalizations made in this study are applicable only to the progress made by freshman students during the first one and one-half quarters of the composition sequence.
3. The generalizations made in this study are limited to freshman students enrolled in composition at Western Illinois University.

Statement of the Research and Null Hypotheses

I. Research Hypotheses

1. There will be a significant difference pre and post in terms of writing improvement as measured by the Standard Essay

Evaluation Sheet, for students who have taken one and one-half quarters of composition, in the areas of content, organization, style, mechanics, and overall score.

II. Null Hypotheses

1. There will be no significant difference pre and post for each student in the area of content.
2. There will be no significant difference pre and post for each student in the area of organization.
3. There will be no significant difference pre and post for each student in the area of style.
4. There will be no significant difference pre and post for each student in the area of mechanics.
5. There will be no significant difference pre and post for each student in the overall essay score.
6. There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 111 in the area of content.
7. There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 111 in the area of organization.
8. There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 111 in the area of style.
9. There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 111 in the area of mechanics.
10. There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 111 in the overall essay score.
11. There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 101 in the area of content.
12. There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 101 in the area of organization.
13. There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 101 in the area of style.
14. There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 101 in the area of mechanics.
15. There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 101 in the overall essay score.

16. There will be no significant difference pre and post for the group in the area of content.

17. There will be no significant difference pre and post for the group in the area of organization.

18. There will be no significant difference pre and post for the group in the area of style.

19. There will be no significant difference pre and post for the group in the area of mechanics.

20. There will be no significant difference pre and post for the group in the overall essay score.

21. There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question II A on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.

22. There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question II B on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.

23. There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question II C on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.

24. There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question II D on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.

25. There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question II E on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.

26. There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question III A on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.

27. There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question III B on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.

28. There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question III C on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.

29. There will be no significant differences between the group mean differences for the areas of content, organization, style, mechanic, and overall score.

30. There will be no significant differences between the group mean differences on yes responses for questions II A, II B, II C, II D, II E, III A, III B, and III C.

Definition of Terms

In any type of research, but especially experimental research, there is a need to define a variety of terms used by the experimenter. The need for clear definitions is important, for without them the entire research project would lack clarity and hinder the possible replication of the experiment. Defined below are those terms utilized by this writer during the course of studying freshman writing improvement. The terms defined are those deemed essential for replication and understanding of this particular study.

1. Content: As interpreted by the Department of English and the essay raters used in this experiment, content concerns a writer's handling of the material to be written about. Three primary factors are considered: Does the student discuss a significant subject? Does he discuss it intelligently? Does he discuss it completely?

2. Duncan's Multiple Range Test: A technique which allows a comparison of groups of means. By comparing the means in pairs, triples, etc., it is often possible to determine precisely any significant differences between the group of means being analyzed.

3. Freshman Composition Program: The program is composed of numerous areas with each one designed to meet a specific need as defined below.

   A. 111, 112, 113 Sequence: Designed to be the basic program in freshman composition; this sequence strives to aid freshman students in developing and expressing their ideas in clear, idiomatic English.

   B. 101, 102, 103 Sequence: Designed primarily for freshman students who have shown special ability in English according to the evaluation procedure used by the department of English which includes class rank and ACT scores overall as well as in English. The course involves the student in more writing about literature than is found in the 111 sequence.

   C. 238 Intensive Writing Center: Directed writing and individual tutoring. The student proceeds at his own pace for one, two, or three quarters of tutoring according to need, until his writing is at least at the C level. This course is offered to those students who need extra help while enrolled

in composition and also to students who fail to maintain a C average after completing three quarters of composition.

D. Advanced Placement: Students who show themselves to be superior writers on the placement test or by passing the proficiency exam given each quarter or by instructor recommendation, may be exempted from enrolling in freshman composition and in turn receive credit for one, two, or three quarters of English.

4. Level of Significance: A judgement based on the improbability of a certain idea, concept, or phenomena occuring by chance. A hypothesis is rejected (null hypothesis) when statistical significance confirms that the findings do not occur by chance. As an example, if the confidence level (level of significance) is set at five per cent, otherwise known as the .05 level of confidence, as a criterion for rejection, inotherwords this means that the probability of a particular phenomena occuring by chance would be five times out of one hundred.

5. Mean and Mean Difference: The mean is simply the addition of all the scores on a particular test and then the division of that total by the number of scores reported. The mean difference is when the mean for one set of scores is subtracted from the mean of a second set of like scores. The resulting difference is reported as the mean difference.

6. Mechanics: Simply that area of composition concerned with spelling, grammar, idiomatic expression, and punctuation.

7. Organization: Organization concerns the effective development of ideas so that the paper has a beginning, middle, and an end. It primarily involves the following questions: 1) Is the central idea clear?; 2) Are there ample details and examples to to develop the central idea?; 3) Are the ideas developed in logical order?; 4) Are the transitions adequate?; and 5) Are the ideas given emphasis required by their importance?

8. Standard Deviation: An index of variability concerned with the dispersion of scores up and down and it is sensitive to the position of every score in a distribution. This statistic is utilized to compute the deviations of scores in a sample from the mean (average) score.

9. Standard Essay Evaluation Sheet: A form originally devised in California as the California Essay Rating Scale and later adopted by the Department of English for the expressed purpose of formulating a standard criteria of measurement in evaluating newly enrolled freshman writing samples. The form is devised on an ordinal scale (see page 44) ranging from one to ten on the four areas of concern generally agreed upon as being the fundamental areas of composition by most professionals in the field (see Related Literature, page 26+).

10. Student Writing Improvement: Measured in terms of the whole population under experimentation as well as in terms of individual students, improvement will be considered significant at the .01 level of confidence when statistically computed. Improvement will be measured in each of the five areas of content, organization, style, mechanics, and overall score according to the Standard Essay Evaluation Sheet.

11. Style: The development of writing style so that uniqueness and effective stylistic procedures become apparent as students demonstrate sophisticated use of tropes, schemes, and other stylistic procedures to make their writing their own.

12. "T" Test of Significance: In the case of this experiment the "T" test is a paired one which analyzes the pre and post scores for each individual and then derives its values using the mean differences of the data. By dividing the mean differences of scores by the square root of the standard deviation divided by the number of subjects, the result is a "t" value. Going to a Table of Critical Values of t and locating the t value for the particular test being done, the experimenter can immediately see if his results are significant and at what level the significance exists for the independent means studied.

FOOTNOTES

1. Roger K. Applebee and James R. Squire, "A National Study of High School Programs," English Education Today, eds. Louis S. Josephs and Erwin R. Steinberg, (New York: Noble and Noble), 1970, p. 7.

2. Thomas W. Wilcos, "The Study of Undergraduate English Programs: Some Preliminary Findings," College English, XXIX (March, 1968), p. 446.

3. Ibid., p. 446.

4. Albert Kitzhaber, Themes, Theories, and Therapy: The Teaching of Writing in College, (New York: McGraw - Hill Company, 1963) p. 8.

5. Ibid., pp. 1-2.

6. Ernest G. Mathews and George Scouffas, "The Freshman's Errors in Composition," Illinois English Bulletin, XXXIX (May, 1952),

7. Kitzhaber, p. 2.

8. Ibid., p. 3.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

The main source bibliography used in this study was Research in Written Composition by Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer. The bibliography drawn up by them consisted of the 504 dissertations, studies, and articles thought to be the most useful out of over 1,000 such papers screened by them and their associates. Since the entries given by Braddock are from 1963 or earlier, it was necessary to consult other sources for more current material. Two such sources which proved to be helpful were the ERIC documents and a publication of the NCTE entitled Research in the Teaching of English. Though little research precisely as that done in this study was reported in the literature analyzed, a large portion concerning peripheral aspects of this experiment had been researched. Those concerns which have a close connection with this study are reported on below.

The Concerns of Composition Courses: Methods and Objectives

To say that the teaching of composition has many problems is not hard. Numerous studies [18,21,29][1] in this area bear that point out very well. Fellers (18-1953) feels we must extend the freshman composition program beyond a one-year course in order to deal with the many problems properly and completely.[2] Likewise, Gorrell (21-1965) states that administrative manuevering or teaching machines will not put an end to the problems of overloaded classrooms, overworked teachers, or poorly structured courses.[3] Gorrell goes on to point out that freshman composition must alter its content so that it does not merely become a repetition of high school English but becomes, rather, an entirely new

experience to students where ideas and concepts are isolated into limited areas and dealt with completely. Lamberts (29-1967) feels very much like Gorrell in that he senses most freshman composition courses are designed with the English major in mind and not the layman who needs instruction in the basics of clear thinking.[4]

Beyond the general feeling that much careful consideration needs to be done in terms of what freshman writing courses are expected to accomplish, there have been a variety of studies done on what these courses should contain if positive results are to be expected from students. The Colorado study (10-1965) offers many helpful suggestions on course input. One of the most important suggestions made was that composition be a sequential program because most students are not at the same ability level nor do they progress at the same pace.[5] By offering a program designed sequentially, departments could better provide for all types of students with varying abilities in writing. Inasmuch as many professionals in the field of composition have drawn up numerous objectives for courses in writing, five studies [9, 15, 29, 31, 33] appear to summarize the basic concerns scattered throughout much of the literature of this particular area. Cochrane (9-n.d.), Lauroesch (31-1956), and Marcus (33-1952) all feel that the important factor in any freshman program is to stress the basic skills of communication which include not only writing but also reading, speaking, listening, and understanding. Lauroesch extends this field even further by including work on a research paper along with a greater concentration on writing skills themselves which should be practiced by increasing the amount of writing done in the classroom. Diederich [15] and others [8, 9, 14, 26 29, 43] have isolated what they believe teachers should stress in student writing

through learning and doing. These basic concerns fall into five main catagories: Ideas, which involves content, clarity, relevance, and development; Form, consisting of organization and analysis; Flavor, which is basically concerned with style, interest, and sincerity; Mechanics, the grammatical and punctuational aspects of writing; and Wording, concerned with word choice and arrangement.[6]

In order to carry out the objectives expressed throughout much of the literature, it is necessary for composition instructors to devise some type of methodology. Though few studies were designed to study methods of teaching alone (i.e., methodology was secondary to some other aspect being studied), important experimental studies by Becker (3-1960), and McColly (35-1963) are worthy of note because of their conclusions concerning methods of approach.

Becker, in a State University of Iowa project, compared three methods of learning and teaching composition in an attempt to see if one method was more effective than the others. The three methods used were called the "normal" method, which had students meet four times per week as they had been doing prior to the experiment; the "Bibliography" method, which reduced the number of class meetings and supplemented them with bibliographies of outside supplementary readings; and the "kinescope" method, which used tapes of "experts" in various aspects of composition to present the main ideas of writing.[7] The conclusion drawn by Becker was that "students can acquire a knowledge of the principles of communication . . . equally well from each of the methods of instruction tested."[8] It was interesting to note that the instructors preferred the "normal" method of instruction because it allowed time to discuss the process of

writing with the students more than the other methods did which apparently is an important concern to composition instructors. The method voiced by McColly expresses a point of view that is often backed up by the literature [3, 6, 9, 19, 29, 30, 32]. His contention is that "the activity of writing in and of itself is fruitless"[9] unless teachers spend at least two or three days of "practical explanation, student practice, discussion, revising, rewriting, etc."[10] In other words, it is important that students write but it is equally important to have students discuss and rework what they have written.

Student Writing Ability: Problems, Solutions, and Improvement

By and large, most studies [6, 8, 12, 19, 23, 28, 32] involved with student writing improvement have confirmed that students do really improve. Though little research indicates that students improve because of the amount of writing they do, a variety of studies find student improvement due to a few particular causes. Buxton (6-1959) and others [19, 32] found student improvement came as a result of essay revision, more than any other factor. Along with this revision it has been suggested by Buxton that teachers should informally discuss essay problems with students and offer constructive criticism for improving weak essays.[11]

Fellows [19] confirms Buxton's findings by showing how one group of students that did not receive teacher criticism and correction failed to improve as much as a similar group of students who received both of these things as well as having to revise each of their essays.[12] Heys (23-1962) found that having students do outside readings of essays was a positive influence on their writing ability.[13] Likewise, Christiansen, (8-1965), in a writing frequency experiment, found that reading helps

students improve in writing. In this study Christiansen had one group write twenty-four essays and a control group write eight essays with supplemental reading and discussion of prose essays. At the conclusion of the experiment, both groups were shown to improve but neither one improved significantly over the other. The conclusion drawn by Christiansen was that reading prose essays will do as much to improve a student's writing as will writing three times as many essays.[14] Though the literature does not support the idea of writing frequency being a means of student writing improvement, La Brant (28-1953) feels that if students practice writing on subjects that interest them it will do more to improve their writing skill than will the traditional methods of grammar drills, exercises, and writing workbooks.[15]

Though many studies optimistically point out that students can and do improve, there are a large number of studies [14, 16, 30, 34, 36, 43] that indicate problem areas in student writing ability. Though no studies analyzed felt that students, instructors, or composition courses were to be blamed for student inability, many of them did indicate specific problem areas that should be corrected. Dressel (16-1952), Lange (30-1948), and Mathews (34-1952) all felt that "students should be held responsible for effective composition in all of their courses"[16] and further that "every teacher must be responsible for the student's expression of ideas, facts, and attitudes."[17] Day (14-1943) took the problem even further by saying that "the weaknesses in compositions . . . suggest that high school teachers must place increasing emphasis upon the selection of significant material and upon organizing it logically and presenting it effectively."[18]

The solution provided by these studies, then, appears to be two-fold. Instructors must be willing to work closely with students in discussing and correcting their essays while students must painstakingly revise what they write. In addition to this work within the classroom, instructors in all other academic fields must also demand student responsibility in writing as well as becoming more responsible themselves.

Essay Grading and Graders

Next to research concerning student writing improvement and frequency of writing, studies concerned with essay grading and graders are most numerous. One of the classical studies of grading methods and practices was conducted by Hartog (22-1941). Using a group of examiners who graded seventy-five essays each, Hartog tested whether or not one of two grading procedures was superior to the other. The two grading methods employed were the analytic, where a predetermined numerical scale was established for certain areas of the essay, and the general impression method, which allowed each examiner to evaluate each essay using his own general impression. The conclusion drawn was that "no greater precision of marking is obtained by details rather than by impression."[19] Since this study, a similar one conducted by Wiseman (43-1949) drew the same relative conclusion. In direct opposition to the findings of these two studies are three studies by Braddock (4-1968), Cast (7-1939), and Coward (11-1952) which tend to indicate that the analytic method of grading "appears almost uniformly the best."[20] The general consensus in favor of the analytic method is that such a method tends to reduce the influence of grader bias by setting up a uniform grading scale to be used by all graders in a particular experiment or situation.

In addition to the studies which have analyzed the general impression method of grading against an analytic method, there is one study by Follman and Anderson (20-1967) which investigated the reliability of five grading procedures -- four of them analytic in nature and the fifth one being of general impression. Using five rating groups, each one with a different rating procedure, Follman assigned each group a set of ten essays to grade. The five scales used were the "California Essay Scale," the "Cleveland Composition Rating Scale," the "Diederich Rating Scale," the "Follman English Mechanics Guide", and the one general impression system known as the "Everyman Scale" where each rater graded the essays his own way.[21] The general conclusions drawn were that the Follman Scale had the highest correlation among individuals and for the group of raters while the California Scale also proved to be very reliable. The Cleveland Scale was the least reliable rating scale followed by the Diederich Scale. An interesting conclusion drawn by Follman was that the Everyman Scale was also quite reliable when used by an individual in rating essays.

In terms of grader variability, Smith (38-1969) found that among experts in the teaching of composition agreement in judgement, as measured by the test he employed, does exist and is reliable.[22] Thompson, (40-1955), on the other hand, noted that within the English Department analyzed that variences in grading existed for the whole rhetoric program in one out of three graders employed.[23] Likewise, Anderson (1-1960)also noted that variances in grader marks existed in 78% of the cases studied, indicating, he felt, a need for a clearer criteria of grading student essays.[24] This criteria seems to be to use an analytic

grading scale that all graders have used consistently. Such an assumption is further enforced by Wormsbecker (45-1955) who used three methods of grading essays and found that any of the methods was useful as long as the graders were consistent in their use of the methods employed.

Objective Tests versus Essay Tests in Evaluating and Placing Students

For decades English departments have fought bitterly over the issue of whether or not objective tests only, essay tests only, or a combination of the two, should be used in evaluating and placing freshman students in composition. The landmark study in this area was done by Huddleston (24-1952) in an attempt to formulate some empirical results on the issue of objective testing versus essay testing. Huddleston's investigation involved five different types of institutions and divided the students into sixteen classes of twenty-two to thirty-three persons each. The study used a variety of objective and essay measures in order to measure student writing ability and attempted to determine if one method was superior over another. It was found that the reliability coefficients of the Objective English section (.78) and of the Verbal Test (.96) were satisfactorily high to indicate reliability of the test as a measure of student ability. The reliability coefficient for the Essay question, though, was only .62 and considered unsatisfactory.[25] The conclusion drawn by Huddleston was that it "has been impossible to demonstrate . . . that essay questions, objective questions, or paragraph revision exercises contain any other factor other than verbal--these types of questions measure writing ability less well than does a typical verbal test."[26] Sutton and Allen (39-1964) drew the same basic

conclusion when they found that an objective CEEB test showed greater improvement in student ability pre and post than did an analysis of student essays. Likewise, Anderson (1-1960), after using an essay type test, concluded that student composition fluctuations were very high (78%) and because of this a clearer criteria of measure must be established. Though little research appears to favor the essay test as the sole measure of student writing ability, Eley (17-1955) argues strongly that the essay test be retained:

> There is no doubt that from some points of view we could find reasons for abandoning forever the essay test. Unfortunately, the corollary to this action is the decline in the teaching of the art of writing. This is a serious consequence both for the individual and for our society. The ability to use our language creatively is one of the last strongholds of the individual against a growing tendency toward conformity.[27]

Though this arguement may be deemed an emotional one, it is sound and should be given strong consideration by those who wish to phase out the essay as a necessary measure of student ability with language. Since the amount of research done in this area is not extensive, it would seem plausible to investigate the problem more fully before a final decision to abandon the essay test in favor of an objective verbal test is made.

Summary of Related Research

Numerous studies [18, 21, 29, 30, 34, 36, 43] have indicated large problem areas and areas of concern within the framework of composition. Three studies [18, 21, 29] indicate that some of the problems are associated with course content, structure, and administration, while others [14, 16, 30, 34, 36, 43] indicate that many of the problems are associated with students and their ability to adequately express themselves in

writing. In light of this, six studies [9, 10, 15, 29, 31, 33] have indicated some specific solutions to the problems of composition. Cochrane (9), Lauroesch (31), and Marcus (33) feel that the basic skills aspect of composition needs to be reemphasized, while Diederich (15) and many others [8, 9, 14, 26, 29, 43] have pointed out specific areas that teachers should be concerned with in teaching students to write. In terms of methodology, the studies by Becker (3) and McColly (35) indicate that so long as the method of approach used is consistent there will be little significant difference between any methods adopted in departments.

In terms of student improvement, the majority of the research [6, 8, 12, 19, 23, 28, 32] indicates that students actually do improve. One of the most important aids in student improvement was found by Buxton (6) and others [19, 32] to be due by and large to student revision of essays and teacher discussion and criticism. Another positive influence on student improvement is reading, as indicated by Heys (23) and Christiansen (8). One study indicates that drills and workbook exercises do little to promote student improvement in essay writing. Though students appear to improve, some studies done [14, 16, 30, 34, 36, 43] have pointed to many problems that need to be overcome in other areas besides the English classroom. The greatest problem indicated was that students are not held responsible in other courses for their writing proficiency [14, 16, 30, 34].

Coincidental with student problems in writing have been a number of studies indicating problems in essay marking and grader variability. Two studies [22, 42] have shown that no differences existed in grading

using an analytic method and an impression method. The opposite viewpoint, which indicated that the analytic method of grading was superior to the impression method, was expressed in three studies [4, 7, 11] with the reason being that it provided uniformity among the graders. Follman's (20) more involved study also supports this latter view. In terms of grader variability, evidence indicating reliable uniformity (38) as well as wide grader variability [1, 40] exists in the literature.

The research on objective tests versus essay tests is split. Huddleston (24) indicates that verbal tests are more reliable than essay tests and is supported in this view by two other studies [1, 39]. Eley (17) presents a plausible arguement for the retention of essay tests.

The general conclusions drawn from the research indicate that many problem areas exist in composition; but, with the application of many worthwhile solutions, student writing tends to improve. Along with problems in composition in general, it has been found that a great deal of concern over grading procedures and grader variability exists. The general consensus is that an analytic method of grading will reduce grade fluctuations substantially while also raising the reliability of graders who consistently use such a method. In terms of the reliability of objective tests over essay tests, the feeling is that more research needs to be conducted in this area before definite conclusions are formed. The best idea that is indicated would be to place students by using both an objective test and an essay test.

FOOTNOTES

1. These numbers refer to the studies enumerated in the bibliography, e.g., 29 refers to the study reported by Lamberts. In some cases, this bibliography number will be followed by the year in which the study was completed, e.g. (18-1953) refers to Fellers who completed his study in 1953.

2. Alvin L. Fellers, "Problems in Writing in College Composition," in Dissertation Abstracts, volume 14. section 2, p. 318.

3. Robert M. Gorrell, "Freshman Composition," in The College Teaching of English, ed. John D. Gerber, (Vol. 4, NCTE Curriculum Series.) New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1965, p. 93.

4. J. J. Lamberts, "Freshman Composition--When Do We Say We've Done the Job?" College Composition and Communication, 18 (December 1967), p. 26.

5. Colorado State Department of Education. Teaching Composition: Suggestions for the Teacher, Kindergarten through College, (Denver, Colorado, 1965), p. 14.

6. Paul B. Diederich, et al. Factors in Judgements of Writing Ability, Research Bulletin RB-61-15, (Princeton: Educational Testing Service, 1961), p. 76.

7. Samuel L. Becker and Carl A. Dallinger, "The Effect of Instructional Methods upon Achievement and Attitudes in Communication Skills," Speech Monographs, XXVII (March, 1960), pp. 70-71.

8. Ibid., p. 75.

9. William McColly, Comparitive Effectiveness of Composition Skills Learning Activities in the Secondary Schools, U.S. Office of Education Cooperative Research Project 1528 (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1963), p. 64.

10. Ibid., pp. 64-65.

11. Earl W. Buxton, "An Experiment to Test the Effects of Writing Frequency and Guided Practice upon Students' Skill in Written Expression," in Dissertation Abstracts, volume 19, section 4, p. 709.

12. John E. Fellows, "The Influence of Theme-reading and Theme-correction on Eliminating Technical Errors in the Written Compositions of Ninth Grade Pupils," reported in Research in Written Composition, ed. Richard Braddock, et al., (Champaign: NCTE, 1963), p. 35.

13. Frank Heys, "The Theme-a-Week Assumption: A Report of an Experiment," English Journal, LI, (May, 1962), p. 322.

14. Mark A. Christiansen, "Tripling Writing and Omitting Readings in in Freshman English: An Experiment," College Composition and Communication, XVI (May, 1965), p. 124.

15. Lou L. LaBrant, "Writing is Learned by Writing," English Journal XXX (November, 1953), p. 417.

16. Paul Dressell, et. al., "The Effect of Writing Frequency Upon Essay-Type Writing Proficiency at the College Level," Journal of Educational Research, XLVI (December, 1952), p. 293.

17. Mathers, op. cit., pp. 18-19.

18. Margaret E. Day, "How Well Do High School Graduates Write?", English Journal, XXXII (November, 1943), p. 498.

19. Sir Philip Hartog, et. al., The Marking of English Essays, (London: Macmillan Company, 1941), p. 240.

20. B. M. D. Cast, "The Efficiency of Different Methods of Marking Composition," The British Journal of Educational Psychology, X (February, 1940), p. 59.

21. John C. Follman and James A. Anderson, "An Investigation of the Reliability of Five Procedures for Grading English Themes," Research in the Teaching of English, 1 (Fall, 1967), p. 32.

22. Vernon H. Smith, "Measuring Teacher Judgement in the Evaluation of Written Composition," Research in the Teaching of English, 3 (Fall, 1969), p. 191.

23. Wayne N. Thompson, "A Study of The Grading Practices of Thirty-One Instructors in Freshman English," Journal of Educational Research, IL (September, 1955), p. 68.

24. C. C. Anderson, "The New STEP Essay Test as a Measure of Composition Ability," Educational and Psychological Measurement, XX (Spring, 1960), p. 101.

25. Edith M. Huddleston, "Measurement of Writing Ability at the College Entrance Level: Objective vs. Subjective Testing Techniques," Journal of Experimental Education, XXII (March, 1954), p. 203.

26. Ibid., p. 204.

27. Earle G. Eley, "The Test Satisfies an Educational Need," College Board Review, XXV (1955), p. 13.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Experimental Design

Since this experiment was conceived at a time when no control group could be formed, it was necessary to choose a one-group pre-test/post-test design. Yet, even with a design as limited as this one is, there is some control of internal validity. Van Dalen, in Understanding Educational Research (41) says that the one-group design

> should be used only for preliminary research when the independent variable is likely to produce a drastic effect, for this lessens the influence of extraneous variables; when the interval between T_1 and T_2 is of brief duration, for there is less opportunity for history and maturation to operate; and when the dependent variable is relatively stable, that is, when it is not apt to change unless a deliberate effort is made to bring about change.[1]

The variables that Van Dalen brings out as being the most crucial to a design of this nature are history and maturation. History, where subjects become sensitized to what may appear on a pre-test prior to the post-test, has been controlled by having each student write on a different essay topic for the post-test than he had written on for the pre-test. The variable of maturity is considerably harder to control. There is a considerable amount of research which indicates that maturity does, indeed, influence student writing ability. The fact that the students involved in this experiment were placed in different surroundings, free from parental restraint, can not be ignored as a factor helping to shape the maturing personalities of these students. Since the time span between the pre and post tests was relatively brief (less than six months) the effects of maturity on student writing would be less significant than if this were a longitudinal study spanning a number of years.

Beyond the initial variables of history, maturation, and time, Van Dalen goes on to mention that the one-group design could also be useful when one or two other conditions exist, namely: when the independent variable may produce a drastic change pre and post or thwn the dependent variable remains relatively stable. There is no way to determine, in advance, if a drastic change will occur between the pre and post-tests but it is possible in this experiment to maintain stability between the dependent variables of content, organization, style, and mechanics. These dependent variables, previously defined in "Operational Terms," were not changed for either the pre-test or the post-test.

In general, then, the one-group pre-test/post-test design, though it does admit many faults in checking internal and external validity, is applicable in formulating some generalizations about the significance of Freshman Composition at Western.

Selection of the Population

The initial Fall registration of new freshman students for the 1971-1972 academic year was 3,098, and they served as the population universe. Of this number, 431 (12%) received Advanced Placement prior to the Fall term and were eliminated. The remaining 2,667 students were placed in a composition course with 1,207 (41%) enrolled in the 101 sequence and 1,460 (47% placed in the 111 sequence.

In order to arrive at a random population, all the Essay Evaluation Sheets from the previous summer placement test were gathered together. The sheets were in no type of catagorical order so that

by using a table of random numbers each student received an equal chance of being chosen. It was desired to draw a double sample in order to allow for the probability that many students would fail to participate. Thus, the initial sample drawn contained 436 subjects with the projected population to contain approximately 200. The final population used consisted of 158 subjects with 278 students not participating for various reasons (see page 44 for complete population breakdown).

Since the sample population was a random one, no attempt was made to stratify the population according to age, sex, socio-economic background, or race. These factors were delimited as having little effect upon the dependent variables being studied. It may, therefore, be assumed that these factors were randomized throughout the sample and any effect they may have exerted will be due to chance.

POPULATION STATISTICS

Total Freshman population officially registered for Fall quarter 1971	3,098
Students having received Advanced Placement and eliminated	431
Students placed in a composition sequence	2,667
Initial random sample drawn for the experiment	436
Students who failed to take the post-test	210
Students who withdrew from school after one quarter	32
Students who moved and did not receive notice of the post-test	17
Students who failed to enroll in two consecutive English courses	10
Students who received Advanced Placement after one quarter of English	9
Final sample population used in the experiment	158
Number of students in the sample population enrolled in 101 sequence	77
Number of students in the sample population enrolled in 111 sequence	81

Essay Raters

After the post-test essays were written, they were matched up with each student's pre-test essay evaluation sheet in order to determine which grader graded the pre-test. This was done so that each grader would grade the same essays for the post-test as he had graded for the pre-test. Once the post-test essays were assigned to one of the three graders used, the same raters as on the pre-test, the students' names were masked to preserve anonymity. The raters were told to rate the post-test essays under as nearly the same conditions as they had done the pre-test essays and to use the same criteria of judgement as previously established. Thus, by having each rater grade the same student post-tests as they did for the pre-test and by further instructing them to replicate the grading situation, it was felt that some extraneous variables involved with marking and grader variability could, to a degree, be controlled.

In terms of grader variability and reliability, a test of significance was established to check on the consistency of the raters. The results of this test are reported and analyzed on page 53 under "Reliability of Raters."

Measuring Instrument Employed

The measuring instrument used in this experiment is an adaptation of the California Essay Scale which was shown to be highly reliable by Follman (20). The modifications made were the addition of a series of questions intended to aid the raters in determining the score for a particular area being considered. The Essay Evaluation Sheet used at Western (see page 44) is designed analytically which means that particular

areas of concern are rated in terms of an ordinal scale and a series of questions are added, to be circled "yes" or "no", to indicate further points of weakness in a particular essay. The areas of concern are those that both the Department of English at Western and numerous professionals [8, 9, 14, 15, 26, 29, 43] have found to be essential if an essay is to be considered effective.

EVALUATION -- 35 POINTS

I. Content: Does the student discuss a significant subject intelligently and completely? (10 points)
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

II. Organization: Is the method of presentation clear and effective? (10 points)
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A. Is the central idea (or thesis) clear? YES NO

B. Are there ample details and examples to develop the central idea (or thesis)? YES NO

C. Are the ideas developed in logical order? YES NO

D. Are the transitions adequate? YES NO

E. Are ideas given the emphasis required by their importance? YES NO

III. Style: Does the essay incorporate effective stylistic procedures? (10 points)
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A. Is the diction accurate, well-chosen, and sufficiently varied? YES NO

B. Is the sentence structure effective? YES NO

C. Is there appropriate variety in ways of developing paragraphs? YES NO

Other Concerns: Concerning mechanics, is the essay reasonably free of idiomatic difficulties, fragments, run-on sentences, comma splices, faulty parallel structure, mixed constructions, dangling modifiers, and errors of agreement, case and verb forms? Is the paper reasonably free of spelling errors and punctuation errors? (5 points)
1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL SCORE: ----------

Controlling Variables

In Research in Written Composition, Braddock (5) speaks of four variables that must be dealt with in any experiment studying composition and essay evaluations. These four variables, called the "writer variable," the "assignment variable," the "rater variable," and the "colleague variable" are of such magnitude and importance to warrant discussion and control in order to check any influence they may exert.

Studies by Kincaid (5-1953) and Anderson (1-1960) indicate that the majority of the students tested "showed evidence of composition fluctuation."[2] Since this is the case for individual students, it is Braddock's contention that students be measured by the better of two or three papers and not on just one sample. Considering the design of this experiment, such an idea is impractical; so it is helpful to note that Kincaid's study concluded that "where a group of college freshmen is concerned, the average quality does not seem to be affected by variations in the day-to-day efficiency of individuals."[3] Since this is the case in this study, it may be concluded that some control is evident concerning the writer variable in terms of the group.

Coincidental with the writer variable is the assignment variable--the topic or topics given to students to write upon. Braddock felt that this variable had four distinct aspects to it, namely: "the topic, the mode of discourse, the time afforded for writing, and the examination situation."[4] Concerning topics for students to write upon, the main problem is to insure that the topics are not so abstract as to be unfamiliar with the entire group of subjects. All eight of the topics used in this experiment (see Appendix A, page 90+), with the exception of "The Fun Picnic" which was later discarded, were kept as concrete

and broad as possible without sacrificing clarity. All of the topics were relatable to nearly any socio-economic background and they were all believed to provide adequate stimulation to the student writers. The second area of consideration was the mode of discourse, i.e., description, exposition, narration, persuasion, etc., under which the students were to write. Again, with the exception of "The Fun Picnic," all the topics used demanded a uniformly similar method of discourse which was centered around exposition. Little study has been undertaken in the area of writing time, Braddock's third concern under the assignment variable. Braddock arbitrarily sets the time limits for college writers at approximately two hours in order to allow for revision and rewriting. Unfortunately, the subjects in this experiment were allowed only fifty minutes in which to write but most students finished before that time. The final area of concern is the examination situation. This variable is concerned with the close replication of the physical conditions that existed for both the pre-test and the post-test in order to control any extraneous stimuli that could possibly interfere with student writing performance. With the exception of weather and time of day, attempts were made to replicate the examination situation for both tests. The conditions of lighting, room atmosphere, and student instructions were as nearly the same as possible in both examination situations. To maintain the same instructions being received by all students so as to prevent any one student or group from receiving any outside stimulation, it was felt necessary to give each student printed copies of the instructions.

The third major variable of concern in an experiment with composition is the rater (grader) variable. Braddock feels that two major facets

of the rater variable must be controlled if any unanimity is to be expected among the raters in an experiment. The first of these is the rater's personal feelings with the best means of control being to keep each student's paper anonymous so that the rater's familiarity with the student--if it exists--will not color his evaluation.[5] One aspect of personal feelings that was not controlled concerned the post-tests. Since the raters were aware of the fact that they were rating post-test essays, room for rater bias to enter the experiment existed and could have possibly confounded the study. The second concern with the rater variable is rater fatigue--the decrease in rater efficiency as the raters become tired. Since the three raters used were considered professionals, they should have maintained their efficiency especially since they were instructed against fatigue and also to grade the post-tests under the same conditions as possible that they graded the pre-tests.

Braddock's final variable of major significance is the colleague variable: the possibility that the raters vary considerably from each other. This variable was checked by controlling three main factors: evaluation criteria, evaluation consistency, and rater ability. The three raters used in this experiment have all taught freshman composition for a number of years at Western and are, therefore, considered to be well qualified in rating the test essays both as individuals and as a group. Rater ability was further enhanced by using a clearly defined evaluation criteria for rating the essays. The method was an analytic one also employing a series of questions as guidelines in evaluation (see page 44). This method of grading is endorsed consistently throughout the literature by Braddock (5-1963), Cast (7-1939),

Diedrierich (15-1961), Follman (20-1967), and others who have consistently shown its superiority over other methods considered. The aspect of evaluation consistency is one that has been a problem in many experimental studies. In order to check on the consistency of the raters used in this particular experiment, a test of significance was done for each individual rater on his pre and post overall mean scores as well as a similar test for the group. A complete discussion of the statistical results is given on page 53.

Data Collection

Once the experimental population of 436 students had been drawn, they were each screened through the Registrar's records to insure they each had enrolled in an English course both in the Fall and in the Winter. This initial screening process eliminated fifty-one students (see page 41) who had either dropped out of school or had failed to enroll in two consecutive English courses.

After screening all students a letter was sent to the 385 students still in the sample by the Director of Freshman Composition (see Appendix A, page 87). The letter instructed each student to meet in a conference room in the Department of English on one of two specified evenings to take the post-test. Upon arriving at the conference room, each student was handed a mimeographed set of instructions (see Appendix A, page 88) which 1) instructed the student to locate his blank essay topic sheet and blank evaluation sheet from the alphabetized stacks in the center of the room, and 2) instructed the student to proceed to a designated room to write the post-test. Prior to the students' arrival each of their pre-tests were matched up with a different topic; the group

of eight topics were the same ones used for the summer pre-test and contained the same set of specific instructions, (see Appendix A, page 90). By having each student write on a different topic from the group, it was felt that the extraneous variable of history could be controlled adequately. The history variable concerns the presensitizing of subjects due to test material contained on a pre-test. In other words, if students wrote on the same topic for the post-test as they had for the pre-test, the possibility that their improvement was due to previous knowlege from the pre-test rather than the variables actually being tested exists. To further insure an accurate replication of the pre-test on the post-test, each student's second topic was randomly selected from the group of eight and as nearly as possible the same number of topics from each group were used. This was done to insure that each subject did, indeed, receive a new topic for the post-test and also it was felt that some extraneous variables concerning the raters and rating unanimity could be eliminated by choosing the same number of essay topics from the eight areas for the post-test as were found in the selected pre-test population.

Once all the subjects had found their post-test topics and evaluation sheets and had gone to their respective rooms for writing, they were personally informed to begin writing by a member of the English Staff. Each student was allowed up to fifty minutes to write his essay and at the conclusion of the time period all remaining essays were collected. Each post-test essay, along with its evaluation sheet, was then matched up with the pre-test essay to determine which grader would receive which post-test to rate. Once this had been done, each

rater was given his set of post-test essays and grading instructions. In order to insure anonymity of each student, the names were concealed and replaced with identifying numbers.

One extraneous variable that needs attention here is that of student anxiety. Considering the students were being exposed to a rather unique experience, insomuch as being instructed to come and write an essay, it is quite possible that the students were generally apprehensive about the situation. Though little research had been conducted concerning anxiety and student writing ability, one study by Currie (13) tends to indicate that student temperament and anxiety effect writing ability to a lesser extent than do other extraneous things. If it is to be assumed that students were apprehensive and nervous during the post-test it must also be assumed they felt approximately the same during the pre-test, a time when they were caught up in the process of pre-registration and familiarizing themselves with the campus. With no means available of measuring the significance of student anxiety, the experimenter is forced to assume that this extraneous variable's effects were randomized on both the pre-test and the post-test.

Tests to be Employed

Once the raters had completed their ratings of the post-tests, each student's pre and post test evaluation sheets were attached and then ranked numerically for ease of handling the data. Since the data gathered was both from pre-test and post-test scores, it was decided that a paired "t" test of significance would provide the essential results needed. The paired "t" was used to test all the null hypotheses concerning any

significant differences, pre and post, on the areas of content, organization, mechanics, style, and overall score for the group as a whole as well as for the 111 students and the 102 students separately. Though the paired "t" was the main test employed, a Duncan's Multiple Range Test was also used to compare the mean differences of each of the areas in order to pin point more accurately where any differences in the data existed. In addition to the analysis of the data concerning the specific areas above, a "t" test was also employed to test any significant differences among the graders. Likewise, the Duncan test was used to note any differences among the mean differences for the yes/no questions on the evaluation sheets.

FOOTNOTES

1. Deobold B. Van Dalen, Understanding Educational Research, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), pp. 255-56.

2. Braddock, op. cit., pp. 6-11.

3. Gerald L. Kincaid, "Some Factors Affecting Variations in the Quality of Students' Writing," in Research in Written Composition, eds. Richard Braddock, et. al., (Champaign: NCTE, 1963), p. 94.

4. Braddock, op. cit., p. 7.

5. Ibid., p. 10.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Reliability of Raters

Since much of the literature has questioned the reliability of essay raters, this study also concerned itself with that problem. In order to ascertain whether or not rater variability existed in this experiment, a test of means was employed for each rater, pre and post. Knowing which essays were rated by each of the three raters for both the pre and post tests, it was then necessary to compute the pre and post means and the mean differences for each rater. Since the mean difference in the overall score for the group was previously calculated by the computor, each grader's mean difference from the group mean differences was subtracted to find the variability of each from the group.

Table 1

Individual Grader Variance From the Group Mean Difference

Grader	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	Mean Difference	Group Mean Difference	Variance From Group Mean Difference
A	12.964	15.660	2.696	3.665	-0.969
B	15.568	21.098	5.530	3.665	+1.865
C	15.078	17.941	2.863	3.665	-0.802

These results would tend to indicate that grader B graded significantly higher than the group mean while graders A and C were slightly below the group mean. If this were the case, the possibility of the group mean having been raised because of grader B's grading practices is possible.

Yet, upon closer analysis, it can be noted that the negative sums of graders A and C nearly balance out grader B's above-the-group mean difference.

Table 2

Actual Grader Difference Between Above and Below the Mean Graders

Grader	Mean Difference
B	+1.865
A and C	-1.771
Actual Difference	+0.094

Wishing to further confirm that the graders did not vary significantly and to also confirm that grader B did not confound the results for the group, two other measures were made. A "t" test was used to measure whether or not each grader's mean difference varied significantly from the group mean at the .01 level. Graders A and C did not vary significantly, while grader B.did. Thus, in order to confirm that grader B did not confound the results the data was rerun through the computor without using the data of grader B. A paired "t" test was used and the results, reported more completely under Section 3, page 58, confirms that even without the data of grader B.the group mean was still significantly different.

Table 3

T Test to Determine Significance
of Grader Variances

Grader	Group Mean Difference	"t" Value	"t" Value Needed for Significance
A	-0.969	1.871	2.326
B	+1.865	3.592	2.326
C	-0.802	1.544	2.326
B - A+C	+0.094	0.175	2.326

Data for Each Student on Each Area

Unlike group results, the results of individual students cannot be calculated through a "t" test to determine significance because there are no mean averages to use in computation of the statistic. What can be done, though, is to calculate the percentages of gain, loss, and stability and from these figures make a judgement. This was done by adding up all the columns of data for the group and determining how many students either gained, lost, or remained stable from the pre-test to the post-test. In all cases the number of students who gained on the post-test was greater than the loss on the post-test. With the exception of the area of style, the gain difference (number of students who gained minus those who lost in any one area) was always greater than thirty per cent or greater than forty-seven students per area considered. In addition to the following table, a group of frequency graphs and the total individual gain-loss data are collected in Appendixes C and B respectively pages 106+ and 98+.

Table 4

Numerical and Percentage Figures for Individual Student Gain, Loss, and Stability for the Five Areas Tested

Area	Student Gain	Percentage Gain	Student Loss	Percentage Loss	Student Stable	Percentage Stable
Content	97	61.5	41	25.9	20	12.6
Organization	98	62.1	28	17.7	32	20.2
Style	77	48.9	51	32.2	30	18.9
Mechanics	78	49.4	28	17.7	52	32.9
Overall Score	107	67.8	41	25.9	10	6.3

Table 5

Numerical and Percentage Figures for the Gain Minus Loss Student Differences

Area	Gain - Loss Student Difference	Percentage Difference
Content	56	35.6
Organization	70	44.4
Style	26	16.7
Mechanics	50	31.7
Overall Score	66	67.8

Thus, though there was no statistical test of significance applicable to each individual student, the raw data would tend to indicate that in all areas, except style, there was individual improvement greater than thirty per cent.

Analysis of Group Data for all Five Areas Considered

In terms of the entire group, there were improvements seen in all five areas between the pre-test and the post-test. In order to measure group improvement, the mean for the group was determined for both the pre-test and the post-test. By subtracting the pre-test mean from the post-test mean, the resultant mean difference, or group gain, was determined.

Table 6

Pre and Post Group Means and Mean Difference
for the Five Areas Tested

Area	Pre-Test Group Mean	Post-Test Group Mean	Group Mean Difference
Content	3.924	4.981	+1.057
Organization	3.683	5.177	+1.494
Style	4.234	4.898	+0.665
Mechanics	2.632	3.094	+0.462
Overall Score	14.487	18.152	+3.665

To test whether of not these results were significant at the .01 level of confidence, it was necessary to apply a paired "t" test to the mean differences of each area to determine statistical significance. The results of this test indicate that all five areas improved significantly at the .01 level, because the "t" value for each exceeds the minimum necessary for significance.

Table 7

Paired T Test of Significance for the Five Areas Tested

Area	Group Mean Difference	Standard Deviation	Degrees of Freedom	"t" Value	"t" Value Needed for Significance
Content	+1.057	2.186	157	6.08	2.326
Organization	+1.494	2.237	157	8.39	2.326
Style	+0.665	2.173	157	3.84	2.326
Mechanics	+0.462	1.160	157	5.01	2.326
Overall Score	+3.665	6.501	157	7.09	2.326

Because the paired "t" test indicates that the results for the group were significant at the .01 level and considerably beyond, further analysis of the group data was done in order to check if any extraneous variables were affecting the results. Two areas that could very well have posed potential threats to the data were these: first, that grader B, significantly above the group mean, was confounding the results; or, secondly, that since the experimental group is composed of both the average ability 111 sequence people and the 101 above average people that the results were being confounded by the 101 portion of the sample population. In order to check on these two factors as possibly confounding the results, tests were devised to analyze both situations.

In the case of the graders confounding the results, especially grader B, another paired "t" test was run without including grader B's data. This was done because neither grader A nor grader C could have raised the group means for the five areas enough to warrant significance since their individual group means were lower than the total group mean on

the area of overall score (see Table 1, page 53). The results of the paired "t" test using only the data from graders A and C show that there was still significant improvement at the .01 level of confidence in all areas except style. As could logically be assumed, the "t" values for graders A and C were lower (though still significant) without grader B's data being included.

Table 8

Paired T Test of Significance for the Five Areas Tested Using Only the Data of the Below the Group Mean Graders

Area	Group Mean Difference	Standard Deviation	Degrees of Freedom	"t" Value	"t" Value Needed for Significance
Content	+0.776	2.220	106	3.61	2.326
Organization	+1.206	2.073	106	6.02	2.326
Style	+0.430	2.061	106	2.16	2.326
Mechanics	+0.364	1.128	106	3.34	2.326
Overall Score	+2.776	6.291	106	4.56	2.326

Though graders A and C did not achieve significance at the .01 level for style, it is doubtful that grader B confounded the group results since graders A and C did achieve significance in the other four areas.

The second possibility, that the above average 101 students could have raised the group mean and confounded the results, was analyzed by separating the data into either the 111 population or the 101 population and running each group by itself. In the case of the 111 data, all five areas were again significant at the .01 level, which indicates that this group did not confound the overall results.

Table 9

Paired T. Test of Significance Using Only the Data of the 111 Sequence Students

Area	Group Mean Difference	Standard Deviation	Degrees of Freedom	"t" Value	"t" Value Needed for Significance
Content	+1.346	2.050	80	5.91	2.326
Organization	1.790	2.306	80	6.99	2.326
Style	+0.951	2.291	80	3.73	2.326
Mechanics	0.395	1.201	80	2.96	2.326
Overall Score	+4.457	6.660	80	6.02	2.326

The results of the paired "t" test for the 101 students were similar with the exception of the area concerning style which did not reach significance at the .01 level. In the other four areas there was a significant improvement at the .01 level.

Table 10

Paired T Test of Significance Using Only the Dat of the 101 Sequence Students

Area	Group Mean Difference	Standard Deviation	Degrees of Freedom	"t" Value	"t" Value Needed for Significance
Content	+0.753	2.295	76	2.88	2.326
Organization	+1.182	2.132	76	4.86 4.86	2.326
Style	+0.364	2.013	76	1.59	2.326
Mechanics	+0.532	1.119	76	4.18	2.326
Overall Score	+2.831	6.265	76	3.97	2.326

When measured individually, then, both the 111 and the 101 populations showed significant improvement at the .01 level with the exception of the 101 population on the area of style. These results tend to indicate that neither population had confounded the results for the entire group in any one area. When compared with each other, the 111 group and the 101 group yield some interesting data. In all cases, the 111 group improved more than the 101 group did on the areas of content, organization, and style. Likewise, the 111 group improved more in the same three areas than did the total sample. This improvement can be clearly seen on the polygon graph in Appendix D, page 113, where the results of the 111 group, the 101 group, and the whole sample group are graphed together on the four previously mentioned areas. In addition, a graph of the overall score gains made by each of these groups is also included in Appendix D where once again the 111 group scored higher than did either the 101 group or the whole group.

Analysis of the Eight Questions Concerning Organization and Style

To determine whether or not any significant differences were made pre and post on the eight questions, a computor was used to add up the total number of "yes" responses for each question on the pre-test and the post-test. Each question, and the pre and post "yes/no" responses follows.

Table 11

Yes and No Tabulations for the Eight Questions Considered On the Essay Evaluation Sheet for Both Pre and Post Tests

Question II A: Is the central idea (or thesis) clear?

Pre-Test		Post-Test	
Yes	No	Yes	No
74	84	111	47

Question II B: Are there ample details and examples to develop the central idea (or thesis?)

Pre-Test		Post-Test	
Yes	No	Yes	No
51	107	80	78

Question II C: Are the ideas developed in logical order?

Pre-Test		Post-Test	
Yes	No	Yes	No
36	122	67	91

Question II D: Are the transitions adequate?

Pre-Test		Post-Test	
Yes	No	Yes	No
23	135	53	105

Question II E: Are ideas given the emphasis required by their importance?

Pre-Test		Post-Test	
Yes	No	Yes	No
19	139	55	103

(Table 11 continued)

Question III A: Is the diction accurate, well-chosen, and sufficiently varied?

Pre-Test		Post-Test	
Yes	No	Yes	No
41	117	60	98

Question III B: Is the sentence structure effective?

Pre-Test		Post-Test	
Yes	No	Yes	No
43	115	77	81

Question III C: Is there appropriate variety in ways of developing paragraphs?

Pre-Test		Post-Test	
Yes	No	Yes	No
43	115	65	93

Once the total "yes/no" responses were tabulated, the mean for the group on the "yes" responses for each question on the pre-test and the post-test was calculated. Subtracting the pre-test mean from the post-test mean, the mean difference was found which was then used in determing significance using a standard "t" test.

Table 12

T Test of Significance for the Eight Questions

Question	Pre-Test Group Mean For Yes Responses	Post-Test Group Mean For Yes Responses	Group Mean Difference	Standard Deviation ****	"t" Value	"t" Value Needed for Significance
II A	.468	.702	.234	.500	5.882	2.326
II B	.322	.506	.184	.500	4.625	2.326
II C	.227	.424	.197	.500	4.952	2.326
II D.	.145	.335	.190	.500	4.776	2.326
II E	.120	.348	.228	.500	5.731	2.326
III A	.259	.379	.120	.500	3.016	2.326
III B	.272	.487	.215	.500	5.404	2.326
III C	.272	.411	.139	.500	3.494	2.326

All eight of the questions showed a significant gain on the post-test over the pre-test at the .01 level of confidence. Thus, in addition to the numerical improvement made by the students, there was also significant improvement found in certain specified areas of organization and style.

**** Since the tabulation of "yes/no" responses does not deal in frequency distributions, there is no formula for calculating the standard deviation. After a discussion with Dr. Charles Oprian, it was suggested by him to use the .500 value in determining "t" in the test of significance.

Analysis of the Mean Differences for the Areas of Content, Organization, Style, and Mechanics and the Mean Differences for the Eight Questions

Though the data previously analyzed showed significant improvement in all areas considered for the group as a whole, further analysis of the data was conducted to determine whether or not any one area improved significantly more than another. Using a computor and the Duncan's Multiple Range Test, the four mean differences for the group on content, organization, style, and mechanics were analyzed. The overall score was not analyzed with the other four since this area consisted of a cumulative total score for the other four areas. The results, both in terms of the computor and in terms of a chart of the Duncan test, are given below.

Table 13

Computor Format of the Duncan's Multiple Range Test on the Mean Differences of Content, Organization, Style, and Mechanics

(Mechanics)	(Style)	(Content)	(Organization)
0.46	0.66	1.06	1.49

Since the first line is under 0.46 and 0.66, no significant difference at the .01 level existed between these mean differences. The same is true between the mean differences 0.66 and 1.06 as well as between 1.06 and 1.49. Because the first line does not go under the last two mean differences, 0.46 differs significantly from 1.06 and 1.49. Likewise, the second line shows that the mean differences 0.66 differs significantly from

1.49. In other words, significant differences at the .01 level exist between mechanics and content, mechanics and organization, and style and organization. These differences can be numerically presented by the following table of the Duncan test. The letters I with various subscripts represent the number of means that intervene between any two means being tested while the SSR is the shortest significant range which is the absolute amount of difference required for significance. In any case where the differences obtained by subtracting two means is greater than the given SSR value, significance exists at the .01 level.

Table 14

Numerical Representation of the Duncan's Multiple Range Test on the Mean Differences of Content, Organization, Style and Mechanics

Mean Difference		I_0	I_1	I_2	$SSR_{.01}$
0.46	0	.20	.60	1.03	0.477
0.66	-	0	.40	.83	0.461
1.06	-	-	0	.43	0.438
1.49	-	-	-	0	
Mean Differences	0.46	0.66	1.06	1.49	

0.46 differs from 1.06

0.46 differs from 1.49

0.66 differs from 1.49

The same Duncan test was also applied to the mean differences for the eight questions concerning organization and style. Since there were eight mean differences being analyzed the computor analysis follows on

page 68, while the numerical table is given below. In the case of the eight questions there were no significant differences at the .01 level for any of the means tested.

Table 15

Numerical Representation of the Duncan's Multiple Range Test on the Mean Differences for the Eight Questions Considered on the Essay Evaluation

Mean Difference		I_0	I_1	I_2	I_3	I_4	I_5	I_6	$SSR_{.01}$
0.12	0	.02	.06	.07	.08	.09	.11	.11	0.178
0.14	-	0	.04	.05	.06	.07	.09	.09	0.175
0.18	-	-	0	.01	.02	.03	.05	.05	0.173
0.19	-	-	-	0	.01	.02	.04	.04	0.170
0.20	-	-	-	-	0	.01	.03	.03	0.166
0.21	-	-	-	-	-	0	.02	.02	0.160
0.23	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0.152
0.23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	---
Mean Difference	.12	.14	.18	.19	.20	.21	.23	.23	

Table 16

Computor Format of the Duncan's Multiple Range Test for the Eight Questions Considered on the Essay Evaluation

0.12	0.14	0.18	0.19	0.20	0.21	0.23	0.23

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

For some time a need has existed for empirical evidence concerning the significance of the freshman composition program at Western Illinois University. An important problem was to test whether or not newly enrolled freshman students improved after one and one-half quarters of composition in terms of an analytic evaluation sheet which was used to numerically rate each student on the areas of content, organization, style, mechanics, and overall score on the essay.

Prior to their initial enrollment in the Fall, freshman students are given an essay-type placement test which is used to place each student in one of two sequential composition programs. Since this essay test was graded using the analytic method above, it became the pre-test for the experiment. By means of random sampling, a group of 158 students was selected as the experimental group to write post-test essays after one and one-half quarters of composition had been completed. Because this experiment was conceived of after the start of the academic year, it was impossible to form a control group to check any extraneous variables that may have confounded the results. Once the post-test essays had been written, they were graded by the same graders who had graded the previous placement essays the past summer. Once both pre-test and post-test scores were established, the data was gathered together and a paired "t" test was done using a computor. In addition to the paired "t" test, a Duncan's Multiple Range Test was used to pinpoint more accurately where possible

differences existed in the data collected. Though, the main data analysis concerned itself with group improvement, the study also undertook to check grader reliability as well as running an analysis on eight questions which were included on the essay evaluation sheet.

The general findings indicated that there was a significant improvement for the group on all areas considered at the .01 level of confidence. To further confirm these findings, the data was divided into two groups--the 111 program and the 101 program--in order to see if one group confounded the overall results. The preliminary findings showed that in both cases significance existed at the .01 level except for the 101 group on the area of style. Tests of significance were done to check on grader reliability and variability and it was found that one grader graded substantially higher than the other two as well as being significantly higher than the group mean. Since this was the case, further tests were made to see if this variability had any adverse effects upon the group results; and it was found that in running the data without grader B's results, there was still significance at the .01 level thus confirming that grader B did not confound the results.

In addition to the tests of significance done on the raw data from the essay evaluation sheets, the Duncan test on independent means was employed to see if any one area of concern was significantly different than the others. The results indicated that the area of mechanics did not improve as much as the area of organization. The Duncan test was also used to see if any of the eight questions differed significantly from any of the other questions, and the results showed that there was no significant difference among the eight. The mean differences for the eight questions was also calculated and analyzed through a "t" test which showed

that there was a significant difference in "yes" responses on the post-test indicating improvement on the specific aspects of organization and style for which the questions were designed.

Thus, the overall conclusions drawn from this study indicate that freshman students do improve their writing ability after one and one-half quarters of composition although it cannot be definitely confirmed that the improvement was due solely to composition since no control group existed to control maturation and other possible extraneous variables.

Conclusions

Since there were a total of thirty null hypotheses being tested in this experiment, it seems best to discuss the conclusions drawn from the data in chapter four according to the specific groupings of the null hypotheses. In that regard each group is presented separately with their own general conclusions and the overall implications are discussed at the end of this section.

1. Reliability of Raters

Though no specific null hypotheses were formulated concerning the raters and their reliability or variability, the following generalizations are applicable in light of the findings.

Though rater B varied substantially from either rater A or rater C, it was noted that the negative variances of the latter two raters nearly balanced out the above-the-mean variance of grader B. With this being the case, the conclusion that grader B did not confound the group results significantly, a fact that is also confirmed through the paired "t" test run without the data of grader B, it can be made. Though grader B varied considerably from the other two, the variance is all but cancelled

out and the grading practices of all three raters can be considered reliable. This reliability is further confirmed by noting that the mean difference between grader A and grader C was less than .200 of one point, indicating the close relationship between the two.

2. Analysis of each individual student on each area

Though no parametric test of significance could be made on each individual student for each of the areas tested, there was an overall improvement of over thirty per cent (47+ students) on all areas except style. Since this was the case, the following null hypotheses were rejected:

> There will be no significant difference pre and post for each student on the area of content.
>
> There will be no significant difference pre and post for each student on the area of organization.
>
> There will be no significant difference pre and post for each student on the area of mechanics.
>
> There will be no significant difference pre and post for each student on the overall essay score.

The null hypotheses "There will be no significant improvement pre and post for each student on the area of style" is not rejected. Since this null hypothesis was not rejected the indications are that curricular planners should give this area more attention.

3. Group Data on all Five Areas Considered

Since gropp improvement was seen in all five of the following areas: content, organization, style, mechanics; and the overall score was valid at the .01 level of confidence, the following null hypothesis were rejected:

> There will be no significant difference pre and post for the group on the area of content.

There will be no significant difference pre and post for the group in the area of organization.

There will be no significant difference pre and post for the group in the area of style.

There will be no significant difference pre and post for the group in the area of mechanics.

There will be no significant difference pre and post for the group in the overall essay score.

Since there was significant improvement, it may be generalized that freshman students, measured as a group, do improve because of composition and other possible influences. These results further indicate that instructors are achieving the goals established by the Freshman Composition Committee.

Since the possibility existed that the study was being confounded due to the variance of grader B or the influence of the above average 101 group, an analysis was made of both these situations. The only area that was not significant for the data of graders A and C was that of style, while the other four areas were significant at the .01 level. The results, therefore, do not indicate that grader B was influential in raising the group means significantly. What is indicated, though, is that there may possibly be different interpretations of what constitutes style being incorporated by the three graders. If this is the case, as the data has thus far indicated, then a need exists to further define this area. To further check on any influences being exerted by testable sources, the group data was separated into individual groups of 111 and 101 students. The data for the 111 group indicated that significant improvement existed in all five areas thus resulting in the rejection of the following null hypothesses:

There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 111 on the area of content.

There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 111 on the area of organization.

There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 111 on the area of style.

There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 111 on the area of mechanics.

There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 111 on the overall essay score.

In the case of the 101 group, significance was noted in all areas except the area of style which was not significant at the .01 level. These results then reject the following null hypotheses:

There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 101 on the area of content.

There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 101 on the area of organization.

There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 101 on the area of mechanics.

There will be no significant difference pre and post for English 101 on the overall essay score.

The null hypothesis, "There will be no significant difference pre and post for the 101 group on the area of style" is not rejected. The general conclusions drawn for the two groups indicate that neither group had confounded the whole group since each individual group reached significance in all areas except the 101 group in the area of style. Again, the data tends to reflect that a significant number of students are not attaining competence in the area of style. This finding is surprising, since the 101 level students may be considered by many to be better equipped to handle problems of style than are students of 111 ability. If this is truly the case, then a definite need exists for more

concentrated work in the area of style with the 101 level students.

4. Analysis of the eight questions

The general findings indicate that significant improvement, in terms of increased "yes" responses on the post-test, existed for all eight questions on the essay evaluation sheet. These findings then cause the following null hypotheses to be rejected:

> There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question II A on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.
>
> There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question II B on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.
>
> There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question II C on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.
>
> There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question II D on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.
>
> There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question II E on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.
>
> There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question III A on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.
>
> There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question III B on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.
>
> There will be no significant difference pre and post in yes/no responses to question III C on the Essay Evaluation Sheet.

Since significance was found for these eight questions, the general conclusions previously drawn are further substantiated. As a group students were better able to organize their thoughts and as a group they were more cognizant of stylistic procedures after one and one-half quarters of composition.

5. General conclusions based on all the data analyzed

As a group all students improved significantly on the five areas of content, organization, style, mechanics, and overall score. These

results indicate that the Freshman Composition program as it is now being administered, along with other factors, does succeed in improving student writing ability after one and one-half quarters.

As a group the 111 students improved significantly in the five areas of content, organization, style, mechanics, and overall score which tends to indicate that instructors are accomplishing the goals set for the syllabus for this sequence.

As a group the 101 students improved significantly in the areas of content, organization, mechanics, and overall score. Significant improvement was not found to exist for the area of style.

The general conclusions drawn from the eight questions analyzed are that as a group students did improve their ability to organize their thoughts and to use good stylistic methods in their writing. The Duncan test of independent means found no significant differences existing for any one question over the others indicating that though improvement was significant it was generalized for all eight questions tested. These findings, then, do not reject the following null hypothesis:

> There will be no significant differences between the group mean differences on yes responses for questions II A, II B, II C, II D, II E, III A, III B, and III C.

The Duncan test of independent means employed for the four areas of content, organization, style, and mechanics found significant differences between the area of mechanics and the areas of content and organization as well as a significant difference between the area of style and the area of organization, thus rejecting the following null hypothesis:

> There will be no significant differences between the group mean differences for the areas of content, organization, style, mechanic, and overall score.

These results indicate that the area of organization had the greatest improvement followed by content. The areas of style and mechanics had the least amount of improvement, although, since mechanics was rated on a five point scale, the findings may be misleading. In general, though, the weakest aspect of the composition program appears to be in the area of style followed by mechanics.

These findings in the above paragraph are further confirmed by the comparative graph in Appendix D, page 113, where the area of organization is clearly that area where the greater improvement is noted. This is followed by content, mechanics (because of the five point scale instead of ten points), and style. Further, in all areas except mechanics, the 111 group was higher than either the 101 group or the group as a whole. Though this is, admittedly, unusual, the greater improvement made by the 111 students may be due to the fact that these students, considered by many to be below the ability of the 101 students, had a longer way to go in terms of improvement, and therefore moved further than the 101 students did.

Recommendations

1. Freshman composition at Western should be maintained as a required sequence for all freshman students.

2. Since the study has indicated that a significant number of students had improved in their writing as a result of the rhetorical mode of teaching at Western, there is every reason to agree with the critics who are talking about accountability and behavioral objectives in English. Thus, future syllabi should be cast in behavioral terms and students should indeed be evaluated as a result of having met the rhetorical behavioral objectives.

3. The argument about whether or not to teach rhetorical skills has been decided affirmatively in this study. Thus, it is recommended that vigorous attention be made to the teaching of the following:

   (a) Discussion of a significant subject intelligently and completely.

   (b) Clear and effective organization of the central idea.

   (c) Logical development of ideas.

   (d) Effective stylistic procedures.

4. Because of the substantial improvement demonstrated by the rhetorical approach, the recommendation is that each instructor be professionally obligated to follow a syllabus predicated on the rhetorical approach.

5. Primary objectives in freshman composition, as outlined by Kitzhaber, should be the service and liberal aspects of the discipline.

6. Use of the evaluation form now included in the syllabus for the freshman composition sequence should be continued.

7. There should continue to be considerable pre-training in essay evaluation prior to summer for persons grading the placement essays; the present evaluation form should be carefully evaluated in such meetings.

8. Students needing mechanical help should be given personalized attention or class time should be devoted to this area. Thus, a close cooperation of writing workshop instructors and instructors is advised.

9. In light of the disappointing results in style, the Freshman Composition Committee should give strong consideration, especially in the 101 sequence, to setting up behavioral objectives for effective stylistic procedures in writing in their curricular planning.

10. Since some students did not improve, further study should be made of their particular situation, especially since they represent what could be the freshman sequence population during a second quarter if a proficiency exam advance places the other students after one quarter.

11. This study should be replicated, using a control group in order to check the influence of maturation and other extraneous variables.

12. The Freshman Committee would be wise to continue to experiment and test teaching effectiveness, as it has small, experimental groups of students working in various ways, i. e., large group lectures, teaching machines, literature-based courses, private study, etc.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

February 9, 1972

Dear Student:

You will recall that you wrote an essay this past summer so that you could be placed in freshman composition. Now you are required to write a second essay in order that we can determine the accuracy of the placement procedure.

Please come to room 341 of Simpkins Hall at 7:00 p.m. on one of the following evenings: February 16 or February 17. Bring a pen. You will be there less than an hour.

Sincerely,

Alfred J. Lindsey

DR. ALFRED J. LINDSEY
Director, Freshman Composition

AJL/js

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS

1. On the tables in the center of the room are individual essay forms and instructions. Remove your form from the proper alphabetical group on the table.

2. Proceed to the room designated below according to your letter of the alphabet. All rooms are on this floor. Should you find no vacant chair please return to this room and notify one of the members of the English staff who will then find another room for you.

3. Disregard the printed instructions asking you to fill in the personal data on the evaluation sheet but DO write your name on the essay.

4. DO NOT begin writing until you are personally told to do so by a member of the English staff.

5. When you have finished writing please leave all materials on the desk or designated place in the room in which you were writing.

6. Thank you for your time and cooperation in helping with the English department's evaluation. Your essay will in no way effect your progress at Western.

ROOM ASSIGNMENTS

307.....M and N

308.....J and R

313.....G and T

314.....B and U

315.....H and Z

319.....C and L

320.....D and E

321.....F and P

324.....I, Q, V, Y, and W

325.....K and A

327.....S and O

EVALUATION -- 35 POINTS

I. Content: Does the student discuss a significant subject intelligently and completely? (10 points) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

II. Organization: Is the method of presentation clear and effective? (10 points) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A. Is the central idea (or thesis) clear? YES NO

B. Are there ample details and examples to develop the central idea (or thesis)? YES NO

C. Are the ideas developed in logical order? YES NO

D. Are the transitions adequate? YES NO

E. Are ideas given the emphasis required by their importance? YES NO

III. Style: Does the essay incorporate effective stylistic procedures? (10 points) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A. Is the diction accurate, well-chosen, and sufficiently varied? YES NO

B. Is the sentence structure effective? YES NO

C. Is there appropriate variety in ways of developing paragraphs? YES NO

Other Concerns: Concerning mechanics, is the essay reasonably free of idiomatic difficulties, fragments, run-on sentences, comma splices, faulty parallel structure, mixed constructions, dangling modifiers, and errors of agreement, case and verb forms? Is the paper reasonably free of spelling errors and punctuation errors? (5 points) 1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL SCORE: ----------

This is your writing assignment. Read it carefully and follow it accurately. Writing time is 50 minutes.

Before beginning the essay choose the one activity which you consider the most important means of expressing yourself. In the essay discuss what it is about you that the activity expresses and how the activity best expresses it.

Express your ideas in a well-planned essay of about 300 to 500 words, using several paragraphs to organize your discussion. Quality is more important than quantity. Your point of view should be supported by and illustrated from your won experience, or by appropriate references to your reading, study, or observation. Be specific. You are expected to express your best thought in your best natural manner. After you have written your essay, underline the sentence which you think comes closest to summarizing your CENTRAL IDEA.

You will have fifty minutes of writing time for this exercise, from the supervisor's instruction to begin work to the supervisor's instruction to stop. During this time you will write your essay, and you may make minor revisions if you wish and have time to do so. You are advised to use five or ten minutes at the end of the hour to check and correct your spelling, choice of words, and punctuation; as well as to find possible careless errors and deal with them.

SCRATCHWORK MAY BE DONE on the blank space below or on the back of this page. You should not attempt to write a draft of your essay on this Assignment Sheet; you will not have time to copy a first draft. If you make notes, be sure you make them on this sheet.

CREDIT WILL BE GIVEN ONLY FOR WHQT YOU WRITE ON THE ENCLOSED COMPOSITION PAPER. This Assignment Sheet will be collected and destroyed.

WAIT FOR THE SIGNAL TO BEGIN WRITING ON THE COMPOSITION PAPER. You should be thinking about the topic and making notes on this Assignment Sheet, but you will not be permitted to begin writing on the composition paper until the supervisor tells you to do so.

REMINDER: Use both sides of the composition paper. If you need more, raise your hand. Use ball point pen.

Write you name at the top of your essay!

This is your writing assignment. Read it carefully and follow it accurately. Writing time is 50 minutes.

How should a fun picnic be organized?

---

xpress your ideas in a well-planned essay of about 300 to 500 words, using everal paragraphs to organize your discussion. Quality is more imrortant than uantity. Your point of view should be supported by and illustrated from your own perience, or by appropriate references to your reading, study, or observations. b specific. You are expected to express your best thought in your best natural nner. After you have written your essay, underline the sentence which you think mes closest to summarizing your CENTRAL IDEA.

Y will have fifty minutes of writing time for this exercise, from the supervisor's itruction to begin work to the supervisor's instruction to stop. During this time y will write your essay, and you may make minor revisions if you wish and have time t do so. You are advised to use five or ten minutes at the end of the hour to check a correct your spelling, choice of words, and punctuation, as well as to find posible careless errors and deal with them.

SCATCHWORK MAY BE DONE ON the blank space below or on the back of this page. You shild not attempt to write a draft of your essay on this Assignment Sheet; you will no have time to copy a first draft. If you make notes, be sure you make them on th sheet.

CRIT WILL BE GIVEN ONLY FOR WHAT YOU WRITE ON THE ENCLOSED COMPOSITION PAPER. Thi Assignment Sheet will be collected and destroyed.

WAIT FOR THE SIGNAL TO BEGIN WRITING ON THE COMPOSITION PAPER. You should be thinking about the topic and making notes on this Assignment Sheet, but you will not be permitted to begin writing on the composition paper until the supervisor tells yo to do so.

REINDER: Use both sides of the composition paper. If you need more, raise your hand. Use ball point pen.

Write your name on the top of your essay!

This is your wtiting assignment. Read it carefully and follow it accurately. Writing time is 50 minutes.

"The double standard still operates is America, but now females are treated better than males."

Why and in what ways do you agree or disagree with the above?

Express your ideas in a well-planned essay of about 300 to 500 words, using several paragraphs to organize your discussion. Quality is more inportant than quantity. You point of view should be supported by and illustrated from your own experience, or by appropriate references to your reading, study, or observation. Be specific. You are expected to express your best thought in your best natural manner. After you have written your essay, underline the sentence which you think comes closest to summarizing your CENTRAL IDEA.

You will have fifty minutes of writing time for this exercise, from the supervisor's instruction to begin work to the supervisor's instruction to stop. During this time you will write your essay,and you may make minor revisions if you wish and have time to do so. You are advised to use five or ten minutes at the end of the hour to check and correct your spelling, choice of words, and punctuation, as well as to find possible careless errors and deal with them.

SCRATCHWORK MAY BE DONE on the blank space below or on the back of this page. You should not attempt to write a draft of your essay on this Assignment Sheet; you will not have time to copy a first draft. If you make notes, be sure you make them on this sheet.

CREDIT WILL BE GIVEN ONLY FOR WHAT YOU WRITE ON THE ENCLOSED COMPOSITION PAPER. This Assignment Sheet will be collected and destroyed.

WAIT FOR THE SIGNAL TO BEGIN WRITING ON THE COMPOSITION PAPER. You should be thinking about the topic and making notes on this Assignment Sheet, but you will not be permitted to begin writing on the composition paper until the sarpervisor tells you to do so.

REMINDER: Use both sides of the composition paper. If you need more, raise your hand. Use ball point pen.

Write your name on the top of your essay!

This is your writing assignment. Read it carefully and follow it accurately. Writing time is 50 minutes.

How do you think the college environment will change your life style?

Express your ideas in a well-planned essay of about 300 to 500 words, using several paragraphs to organize your discussion. Quality is more important than quantity. Your point of view should be supported by and illustrated from your own experience, or by appropriate references to your reading, study, or observation. Be specific. You are expected to express your best thought in your best natural manner. After you have written your essay, underline the sentence which you think comes closest to summarizing your CENTRAL IDEA.

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REMINDER: Use both sides of the composition paper. If you need more, raise your hand. Use ball point pen.

You have been asked to fill in your name and address and date on an evaluation sheet. Be sure you fill in this information. Write your name on the top of your essay.

This is your writing assignment. Read it carefully and follow it accurately. Writing time is 50 minutes.

Given the quality of life in our society, do you feel that man has reached the peak of his accomplishments; or do you feel that there are still "New Frontiers" for man to explore and conquer?

Express your ideas in a well-planned essay of about 300 to 500 words, using several paragraphs to organize your discussion. Quality is more important than quantity. Your point of view should be supported by and illustrated from your own experience, or by appropriate references to your reading, study, or observation. Be specific. You are expected to express your best thought in your best natural manner. After you have written your essay, underline the sentence which you think comes closest to summarizing your CENTRAL IDEA.

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It has been suggested that most of the problems our country is currently enduring are due to overpopulation. If the population is allowed to continue to grow, problems such as pollution, unemployment, and racial friction can only get worse. By this line of reasoning, it would seem imperative that legislative action be taken to establish controls over the rising birth rate. Write an essay supporting or denying the necessity of legislated population control.

Express your ideas in a well-planned essay of about 300 to 500 words, using several paragraphs to organize your discussion. Quality is more important than quantity. Your point of view should be supported by and illustrated from your own experience, or by appropriate references to your reading, study, or observation. Be specific. You are expected to express your best thought in your best natural manner. After you have written your essay, underline the sentence which you think comes closest to summarizing your CENTRAL IDEA.

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This is your writing assignment. Read it carefully and follow it accurately. Writing time is 50 minutes.

"The ideals of a nation are revealed in its advertisements."

Judging from billboards, television commercials, and newspaper and magazine advertising, what might one infer about the ideals of the people of the United States?

Express your ideas in a well-planned essay of about 300 to 500 words, using several paragraphs to organize your discussion. Quality is more important than quantity. Your point of view should be supported by and illustrated from your own experience, or by appropriate references to your reading, study, or observation. Be specific. You are expected to express your best thought in your best natural manner. After you have written your essay, underline the sentence which you think comes closest to summarizing your CENTRAL IDEA.

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This is your writing assignment. Read it carefully and follow it accurately. Writing time is 50 minutes.

Using specific incidents and observations from your own experience to illustrate your general ideas, discuss the important differences between urban living (large cities) and rural living (small towns and farms). Also, relate these differences to differences in social, moral, and political values held by the people in both categories.

Express your ideas in a well-planned essay of about 300 to 500 words, using several paragraphs to organize your discussion. Quality is more important than quantity. Your point of view should be supported by and illustrated from your own experience, or by appropriate references to your reading, study, or observation. Be specific. You are expected to express your best thought in your best natural manner. After you have written your essay, underline the sentence which you think comes closest to summarizing your CENTRAL IDEA.

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APPENDIX B

COMPLETE DATA FOR ALL STUDENTS

STUDENT NUMBER	CONTENT			ORGANIZATION			STYLE			MECHANICS			OVERALL SCORE		
	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff
4	4	8	4	4	8	4	5	4	-1	3	4	1	16	24	8
5	2	4	2	1	4	3	2	3	1	1	3	2	6	14	8
12	1	2	1	2	2	0	2	3	1	3	3	0	8	10	2
14	5	2	-3	5	3	-2	5	5	0	3	2	-1	18	12	-6
20	2	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	0	1	1	0	6	8	2
21	3	5	2	5	2	-3	7	6	-1	3	3	0	18	16	-2
25	7	8	1	5	6	1	6	6	0	4	3	-1	22	23	1
27	5	6	1	2	7	5	5	6	1	3	3	0	15	22	7
31	5	5	0	4	7	3	5	3	-2	3	3	0	17	18	1
34	4	5	1	3	4	1	3	3	0	3	3	0	13	15	2
36	5	10	5	5	10	5	6	8	2	4	5	1	20	33	13
38	3	7	4	2	8	6	2	9	7	2	4	2	9	28	19
40	5	8	3	5	8	3	4	8	4	3	5	2	17	29	12
47	3	8	5	1	8	7	2	7	5	1	4	3	7	27	20
48	4	1	-3	4	2	-2	3	2	-1	2	2	0	13	7	-6
52	3	3	0	2	2	0	1	2	1	2	3	1	8	10	2
53	4	5	1	4	6	2	7	7	0	2	3	1	17	21	4
56	5	5	0	6	6	0	6	5	-1	2	3	1	19	19	0
59	5	4	-1	4	3	-1	4	4	0	2	3	1	15	14	-1
62	3	2	-1	1	2	1	3	2	-1	2	2	0	9	8	-1
64	5	8	3	5	8	3	7	9	2	3	4	1	20	29	9
65	5	6	1	5	7	2	3	6	3	2	2	0	15	21	6

Cont.

STUDENT NUMBER	CONTENT			ORGANIZATION			STYLE			MECHANICS			OVERALL SCORE		
	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff
68	3	2	-1	5	2	-3	2	3	1	2	3	1	15	9	-6
78	3	7	4	2	6	4	4	6	2	3	3	0	12	22	10
80	3	5	2	2	4	2	4	3	-1	2	3	1	11	15	4
81	4	4	0	4	4	0	6	6	0	3	4	1	17	18	1
87	1	3	2	2	4	2	3	6	3	2	4	2	8	17	9
88	5	8	3	6	10	4	5	6	1	3	5	2	19	29	10
93	4	5	1	5	3	-2	4	6	2	2	3	1	15	17	2
94	6	4	-2	5	4	-1	3	3	0	2	2	0	16	13	-3
95	3	6	3	3	7	4	5	7	2	2	4	2	13	24	11
98	2	4	2	2	3	1	2	5	3	2	2	0	8	14	6
99	6	6	0	3	4	1	5	4	-1	1	3	2	15	17	2
101	4	5	1	5	5	0	5	4	-1	2	2	0	16	16	0
102	6	4	-2	2	5	3	6	3	-3	3	3	0	17	15	-2
106	4	6	2	3	7	4	3	7	4	2	4	2	12	24	12
109	3	4	1	3	3	0	3	3	0	1	3	2	10	13	3
110	3	6	3	4	5	1	5	4	-1	2	2	0	14	17	3
113	3	6	3	2	5	3	2	7	5	1	5	4	8	23	15
114	1	6	5	2	6	4	4	7	3	3	3	0	10	22	12
122	6	7	1	6	9	3	7	5	-2	3	3	0	22	24	2
125	4	8	4	5	8	3	3	8	5	1	4	3	13	28	15
126	2	5	3	3	4	1	4	4	0	3	2	-1	12	15	3
127	1	2	1	1	3	2	3	2	-1	2	2	0	7	9	2
128	5	5	0	4	4	0	3	4	1	3	2	-1	15	15	0
130	5	3	-2	5	5	0	6	3	-3	4	4	0	20	15	-5
131	6	5	-1	5	5	0	5	4	-1	4	3	-1	20	17	-3
133	4	4	0	4	4	0	3	2	-1	3	2	-1	14	12	-2
137	2	1	-1	2	1	-1	2	1	-1	1	2	1	7	5	-2

Cont.

STUDENT NUMBER	CONTENT			ORGANIZATION			STYLE			MECHANICS			OVERALL SCORE		
	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff
139	3	1	-2	4	2	-2	4	2	-2	3	2	-1	14	7	-7
140	2	6	4	4	6	2	4	6	2	2	3	1	12	21	9
143	3	6	3	3	8	5	5	5	0	3	3	0	14	22	8
146	3	9	6	3	8	5	5	9	4	4	4	0	15	30	15
148	4	6	2	3	5	2	3	7	4	3	4	1	13	22	9
149	4	5	1	4	5	1	4	5	1	2	3	1	14	18	4
152	4	4	0	3	3	0	2	3	1	3	2	-1	12	12	0
154	3	1	-2	3	3	0	3	2	-1	3	1	-2	12	7	-5
156	5	6	1	6	6	0	4	5	1	3	3	0	18	20	2
157	2	2	0	3	3	0	5	3	-2	4	2	-2	14	10	-4
159	2	3	1	2	3	1	3	2	-1	2	2	0	9	10	1
166	3	4	1	2	4	2	2	2	0	2	2	0	9	12	3
170	4	3	-1	2	2	0	3	2	-1	3	2	-1	12	9	-3
177	4	4	0	3	4	1	4	4	0	3	2	-1	14	14	0
178	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	1	-1	2	1	-1	8	6	-2
181	3	6	3	2	5	3	3	7	4	2	4	2	10	22	12
186	2	5	3	2	4	2	3	7	4	2	4	2	9	20	11
188	4	4	0	5	5	0	6	5	-1	3	3	0	18	17	-1
193	2	3	1	4	4	0	5	5	0	4	4	0	15	16	1
198	5	3	-2	5	2	-3	3	3	0	2	2	0	15	10	-5
199	6	4	-2	6	4	-2	4	4	0	2	3	1	18	15	-3
201	7	8	1	7	7	0	5	6	1	2	3	1	21	24	3
203	3	7	4	4	6	2	3	6	3	2	4	2	12	23	11
212	6	3	-3	5	3	-2	6	2	-4	4	1	-3	21	9	-12
219	3	4	1	4	5	1	6	4	-2	2	2	0	15	15	0
220	6	4	-2	5	5	0	7	3	-4	3	2	-1	21	14	-7
224	5	5	0	3	5	2	4	5	1	3	2	-1	15	17	2

Cont.

STUDENT NUMBER	CONTENT			ORGANIZATION			STYLE			MECHANICS			OVERALL SCORE		
	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff
226	4	4	0	3	4	1	3	5	2	2	4	2	12	17	5
230	5	6	1	1	7	6	6	6	0	4	4	0	16	23	7
235	5	7	2	4	8	4	3	6	3	2	3	1	14	24	10
241	3	6	-3	4	7	3	5	6	1	3	4	1	15	23	8
243	2	4	2	2	5	3	5	8	3	3	4	1	12	21	9
245	4	6	2	4	6	2	4	7	3	2	3	1	14	22	8
246	4	3	-1	3	3	0	4	5	1	3	4	1	14	15	1
247	2	2	0	3	2	-1	4	3	-1	3	3	0	12	10	-2
253	7	9	2	7	9	2	6	8	2	2	4	2	22	30	8
255	2	3	1	2	4	2	2	3	1	2	2	0	8	12	4
257	2	3	1	4	4	0	4	2	-2	2	4	2	12	13	1
262	5	4	-1	3	5	2	5	6	1	3	4	1	16	19	3
263	6	7	1	3	6	3	2	6	4	2	3	1	13	22	9
264	3	2	-1	2	2	0	3	4	1	2	3	1	10	11	1
267	4	4	0	4	7	3	4	2	-2	3	1	-2	15	14	-1
268	5	1	-4	4	2	-2	4	3	-1	3	4	1	16	10	-6
270	4	3	-1	5	4	-1	6	4	-2	4	3	-1	19	14	-5
271	2	6	4	2	6	4	1	5	4	2	3	1	7	20	13
278	3	4	1	2	4	2	2	5	2	3	4	1	10	17	7
279	4	7	3	5	6	1	4	5	1	3	4	1	16	22	6
280	4	7	3	4	7	3	5	5	0	3	3	0	16	22	6
284	7	5	-2	7	8	1	5	7	2	1	3	2	20	23	3
288	6	5	-1	6	6	0	7	4	-3	4	4	0	23	19	-4
290	6	4	-2	4	6	2	5	5	0	3	3	0	18	18	0
291	3	6	3	3	5	2	4	4	0	2	2	0	12	17	5
292	4	7	3	4	7	3	6	6	0	4	3	-1	18	23	5
294	3	3	0	3	3	0	4	4	0	3	2	-1	13	12	-1

Cont.

STUDENT NUMBER	CONTENT			ORGANIZATION			STYLE			MECHANICS			OVERALL SCORE		
	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff
295	6	5	-1	6	6	0	4	5	1	2	2	0	18	18	0
297	8	9	1	7	9	2	7	9	2	4	5	1	26	32	6
301	2	8	6	2	10	8	4	7	3	2	4	2	10	29	19
306	4	10	6	4	8	4	4	8	4	3	5	2	15	31	16
308	7	3	-4	8	6	-2	7	4	-3	4	4	0	26	17	-9
309	8	9	1	8	9	1	8	9	1	4	5	1	28	32	4
310	4	8	4	3	8	5	4	6	2	1	4	3	12	26	14
312	4	6	2	4	5	1	4	4	0	3	3	0	15	18	3
313	4	8	4	3	7	4	4	9	5	2	3	1	15	27	12
315	3	4	1	3	7	4	2	5	3	1	2	1	9	18	9
316	6	8	2	4	8	4	5	7	2	4	4	0	19	27	8
318	7	5	-2	7	6	-1	5	3	-2	3	1	-2	22	15	-7
319	3	5	2	2	4	2	2	3	1	2	3	1	9	15	6
324	2	5	3	2	7	5	3	2	-1	3	4	1	10	18	8
326	3	7	4	1	6	5	2	7	5	1	3	2	7	23	16
328	3	6	3	4	6	2	3	4	1	3	4	1	13	20	7
330	1	3	2	4	3	-1	4	5	1	3	3	0	12	14	2
333	5	3	-2	6	4	-2	7	6	-1	4	4	0	22	17	-5
334	3	6	3	2	5	3	3	5	2	3	4	1	11	20	9
335	2	6	4	3	6	3	5	4	-1	2	4	2	12	20	8
337	5	7	2	6	6	0	4	6	2	3	3	0	18	22	4
338	4	7	3	4	7	3	5	5	0	3	4	1	16	23	7
341	4	8	4	4	10	6	6	8	2	3	4	1	17	30	13
343	4	2	-2	3	2	-1	4	2	-2	3	2	-1	14	8	-6
344	1	2	1	2	4	2	4	5	1	2	3	1	9	14	5
347	5	10	5	5	9	4	7	9	2	3	4	1	20	32	12
350	5	7	2	4	7	3	7	6	-1	3	3	0	19	23	4

Cont.

STUDENT NUMBER	CONTENT			ORGANIZATION			STYLE			MECHANICS			OVERALL SCORE		
	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff
352	2	4	2	2	4	2	6	6	0	4	4	0	14	18	4
354	4	8	4	5	7	2	5	7	2	3	3	0	17	25	8
355	5	6	1	4	6	2	5	5	0	3	3	0	17	20	3
361	2	2	0	2	1	-1	2	2	0	1	2	1	7	7	0
363	3	4	1	3	5	2	2	5	3	2	3	1	10	17	7
367	6	4	-2	5	4	-1	8	3	-5	3	2	-1	22	13	-9
370	6	4	-2	3	4	1	6	3	-3	4	3	-1	19	14	-5
371	2	1	-1	3	3	0	4	4	0	5	3	-2	14	11	-3
380	5	6	1	3	7	4	6	5	-1	4	3	-1	18	21	3
384	2	4	2	3	4	1	6	4	-2	3	3	0	14	15	1
385	3	2	-1	2	2	0	3	2	-1	3	2	-1	11	8	-3
389	7	4	-3	4	4	0	4	4	0	2	3	1	17	15	-2
392	4	8	4	3	8	5	5	9	4	3	4	1	15	29	14
400	6	7	1	7	5	-2	5	7	2	2	4	2	20	23	3
402	5	4	-1	5	3	-2	4	3	-1	4	2	-2	18	12	-6
406	2	3	1	4	3	-1	2	4	2	1	1	0	9	11	2
409	6	3	-3	5	3	-2	4	4	0	4	3	-1	19	13	-6
411	4	9	5	5	8	3	5	9	4	4	5	1	18	31	13
416	1	4	3	2	6	4	3	6	3	3	3	0	9	19	10
418	5	3	-2	5	3	-2	7	5	-2	2	3	1	19	14	-5
421	1	3	2	3	3	0	4	2	-2	3	3	0	11	11	0
425	2	2	0	1	3	2	2	3	1	2	3	1	7	11	4
430	5	4	-1	4	4	0	6	5	-1	4	4	0	19	17	-2
431	3	2	-1	3	2	-1	5	4	-1	3	3	0	14	11	-3
432	4	5	1	4	9	5	3	7	4	1	4	3	12	25	13
433	7	7	0	5	7	2	4	6	2	1	3	2	17	23	6

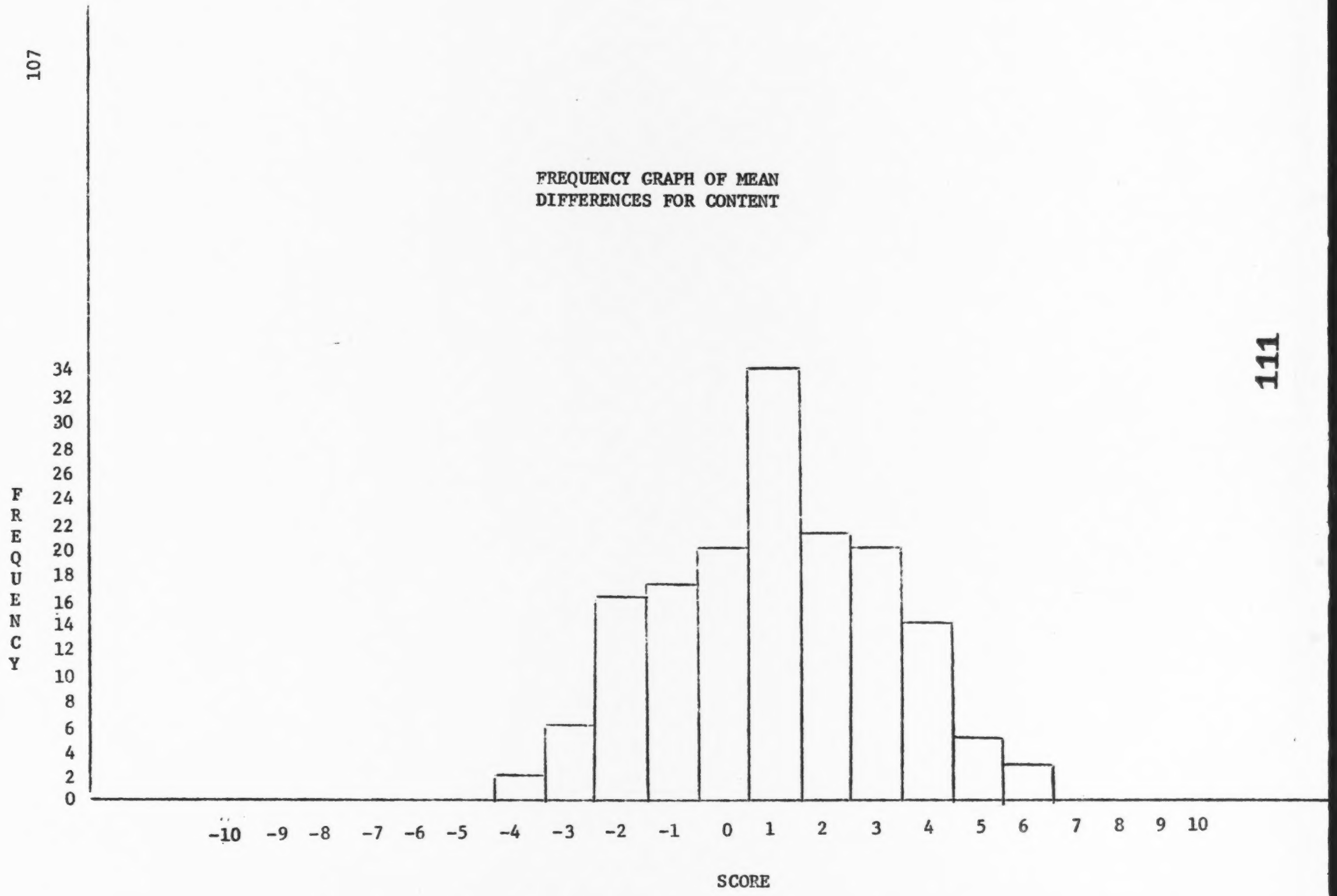
Cont.

STUDENT NUMBER	CONTENT			ORGANIZATION			STYLE			MECHANICS			OVERALL SCORE		
	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff	Pre	Post	Diff
436	4	7	3	3	8	5	4	8	4	3	4	1	14	27	13

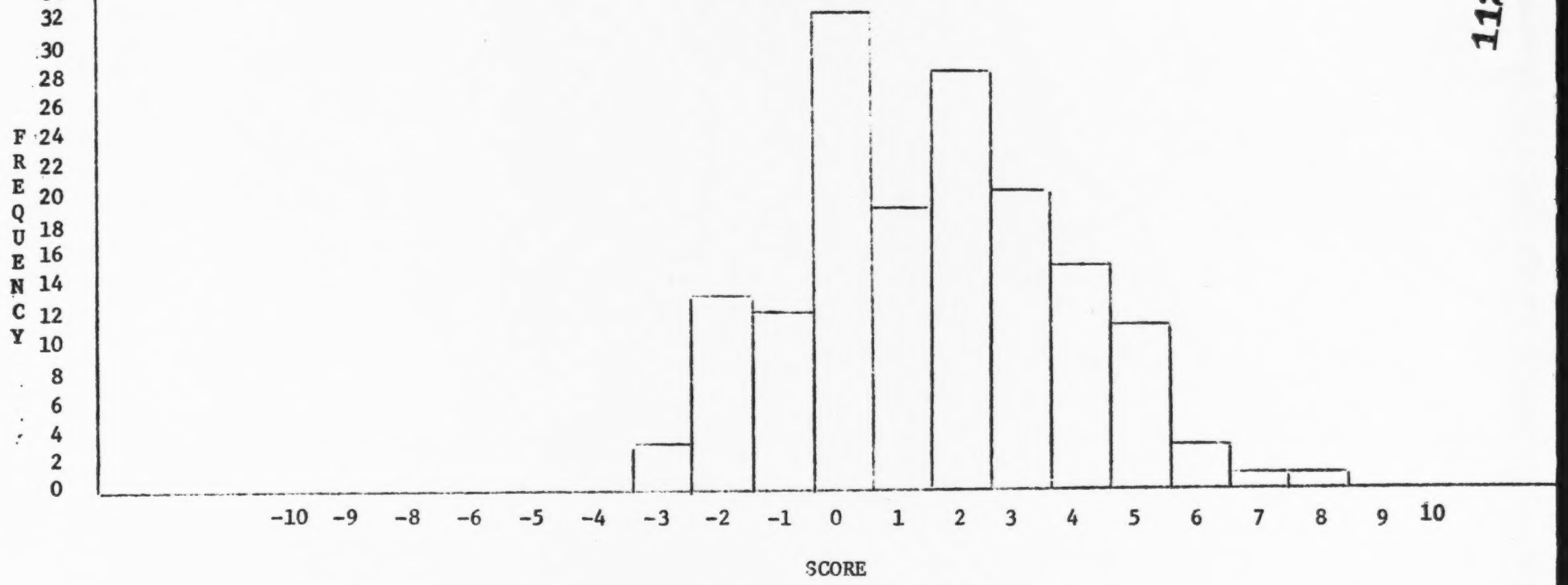
TOTALS:	Pre	Pre	Pre	Pre	Pre
	3.924	3.683	4.234	2.632	14.487
	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post
	4.981	5.177	4.898	3.094	18.152

APPENDIX C

FREQUENCY GRAPH OF MEAN DIFFERENCES FOR CONTENT

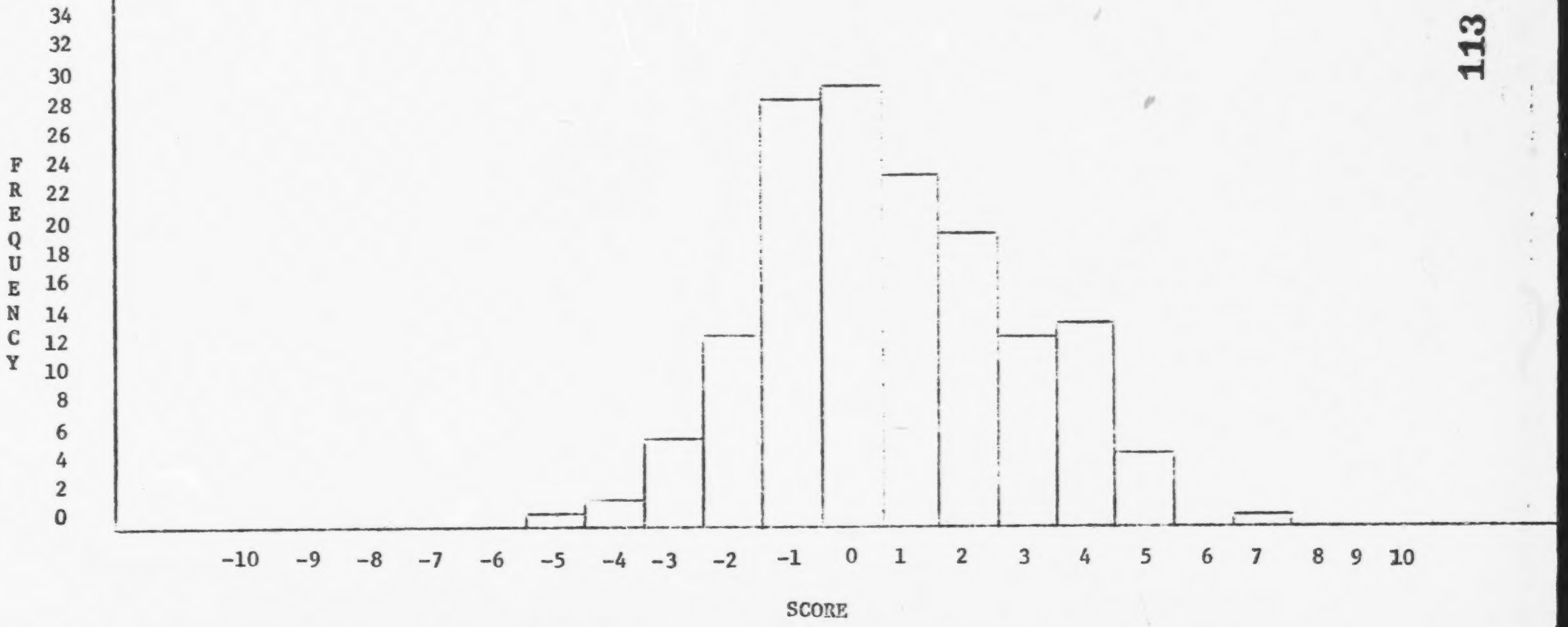


FREQUENCY GRAPH OF MEAN
DIFFERENCES FOR ORGANIZATION



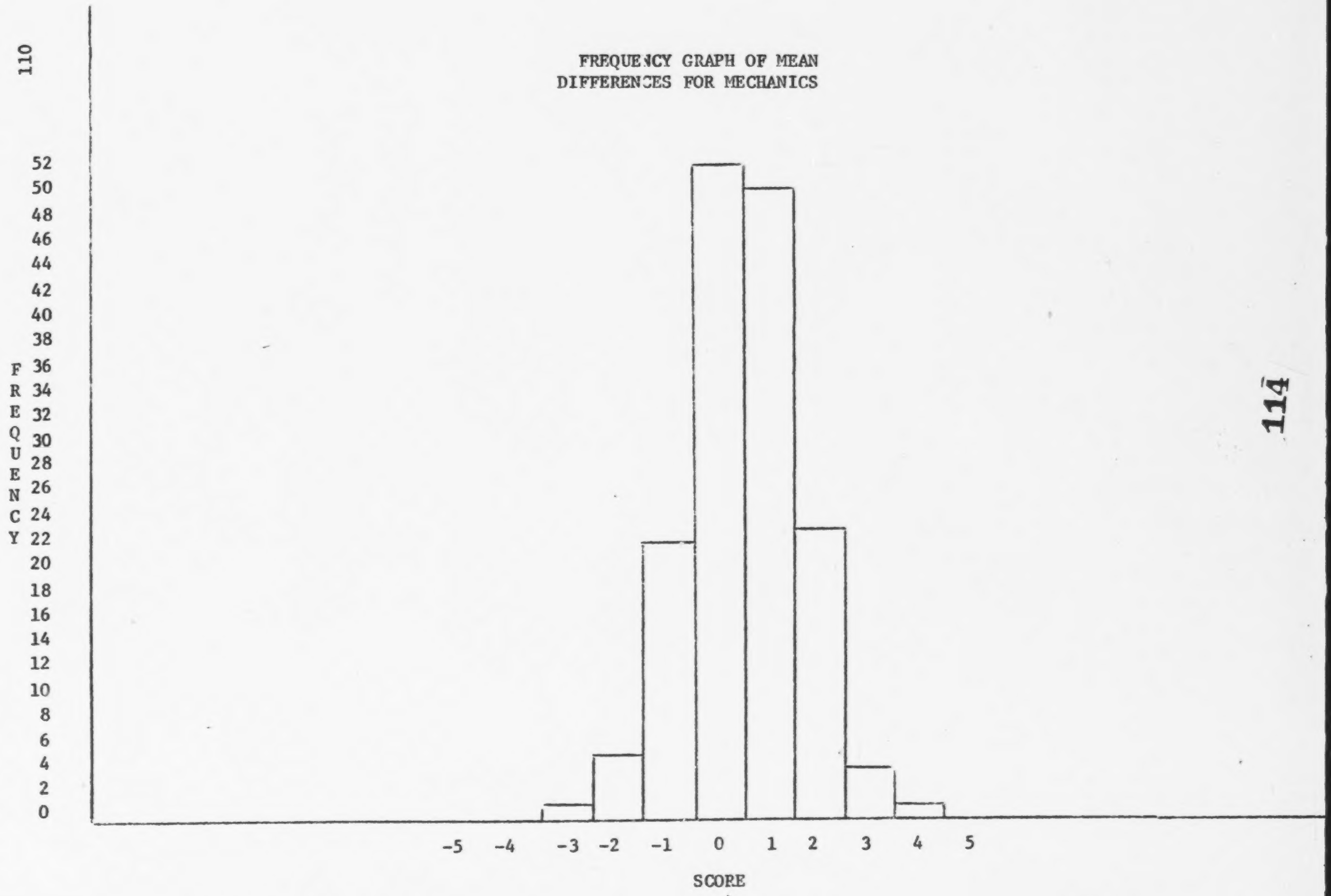
109

FREQUENCY GRAPH OF MEAN
DIFFERENCES FOR STYLE

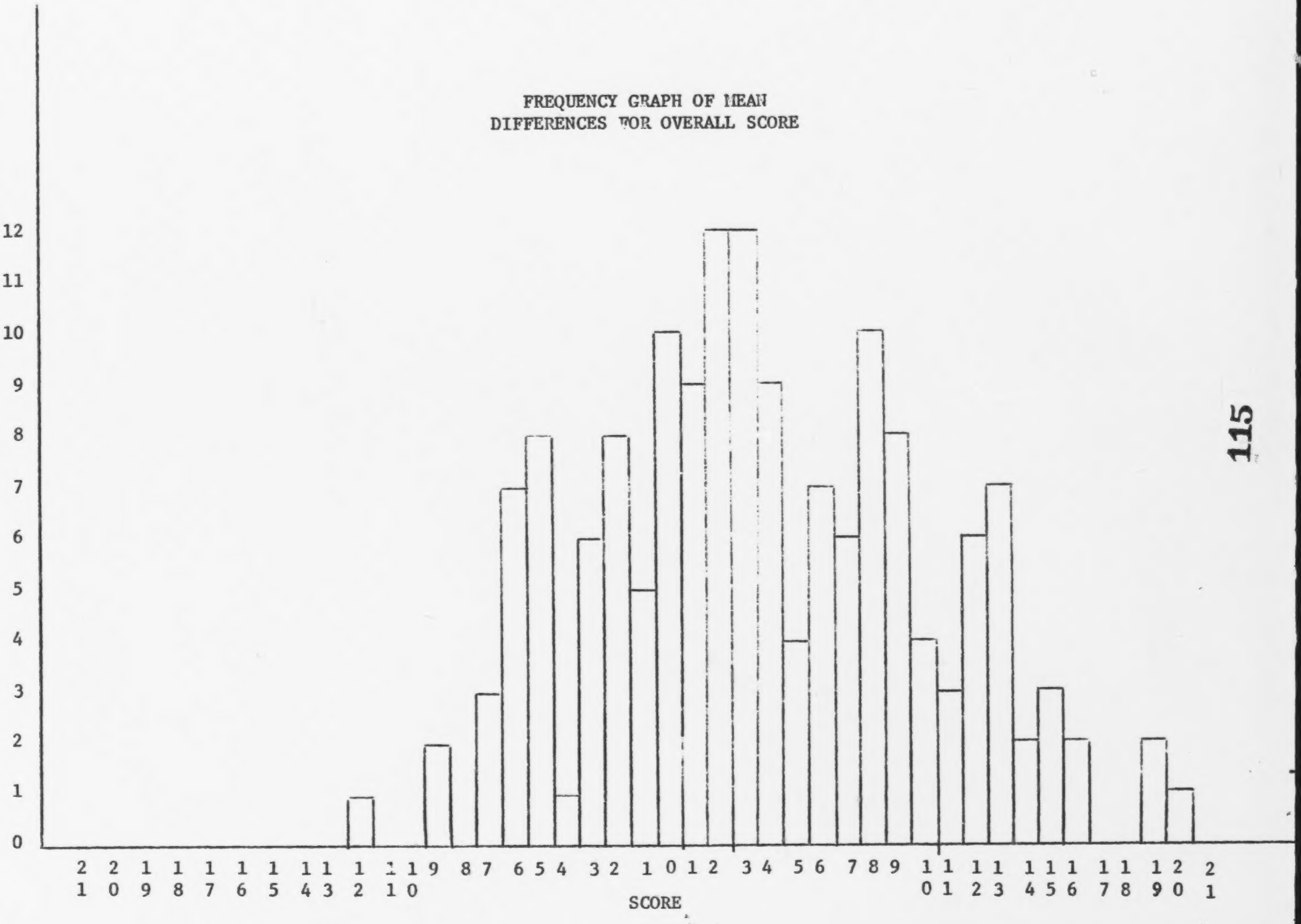


113

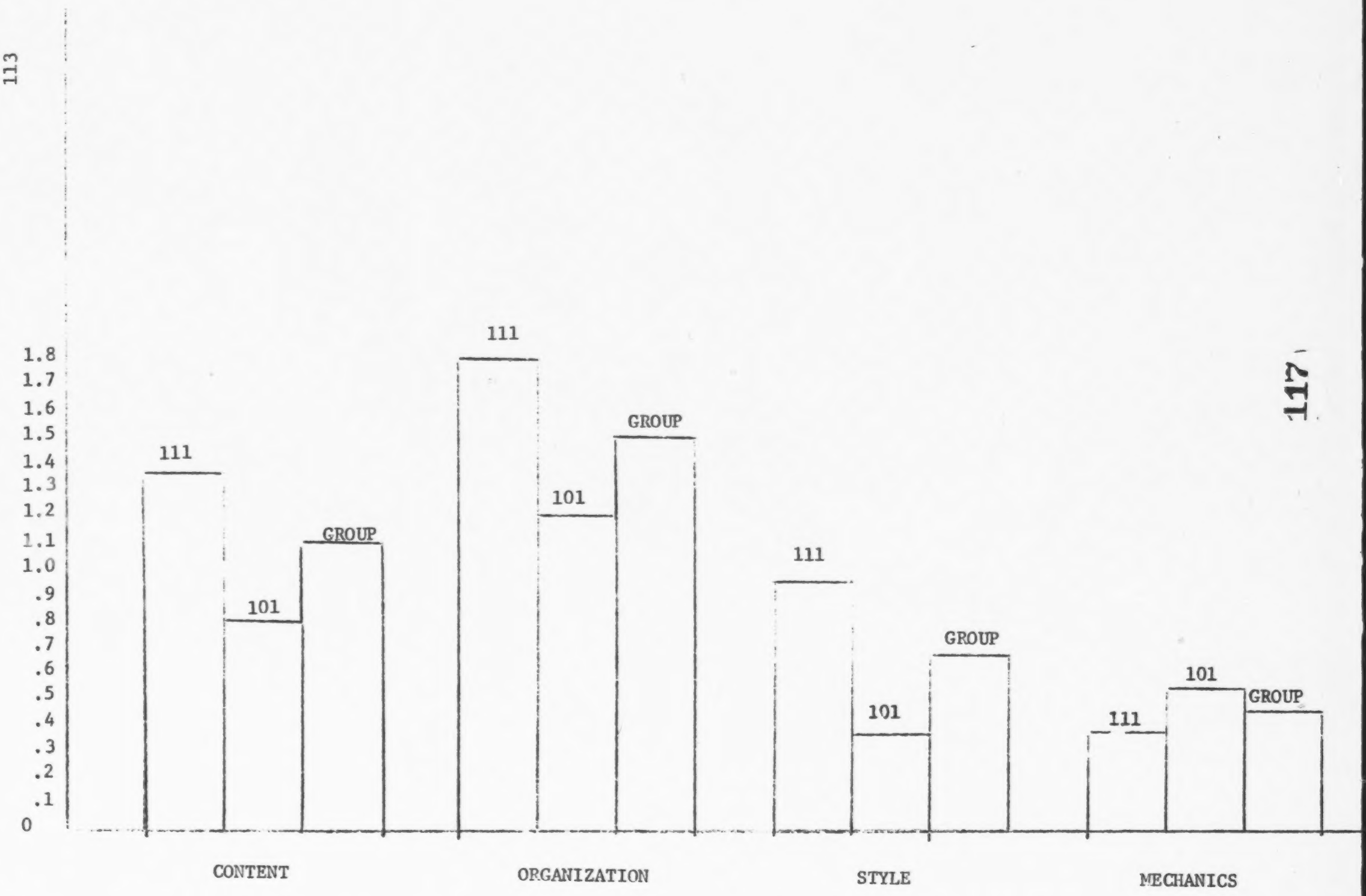
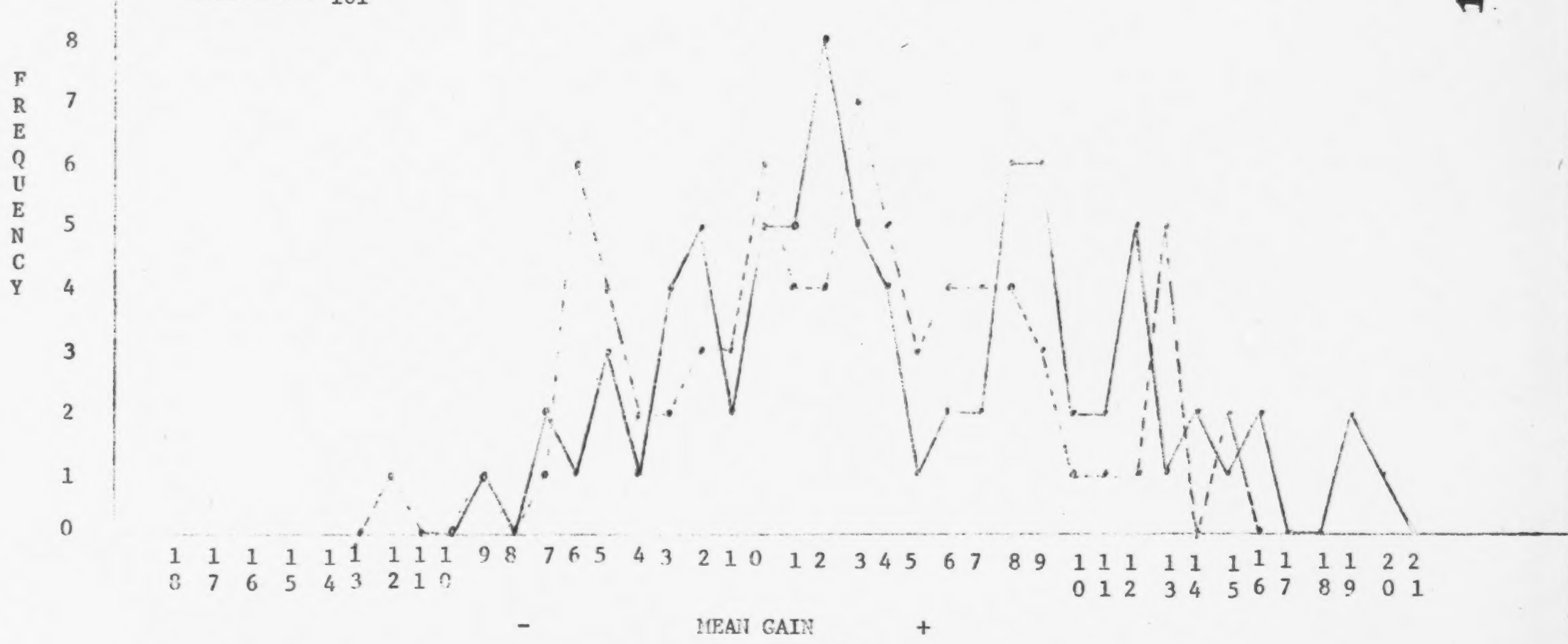
FREQUENCY GRAPH OF MEAN DIFFERENCES FOR MECHANICS



FREQUENCY GRAPH OF MEAN
DIFFERENCES FOR OVERALL SCORE



APPENDIX D


113
111
1.8
1.7
1.6
1.5
1.4
1.3
1.2
1.1
1.0
.9
.8
.7
.6
.5
.4
.3
.2
.1
0
111
101
GROUP
CONTENT
ORGANIZATION
STYLE
MECHANICS

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT OVERALL
MEAN GAIN FOR 111 AND 101